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ABSTRACT

The aim of this essay is to help educators understand, respond to, and survive student militancy. The author analyzes the problem of student unrest; discusses programs for reducing militancy; and explains why student involvement is necessary and how it helps accomplish the purposes of education, stimulates interest, and reduces dropouts and alienation. One section of the presentation is given over to a discussion, from both legal and moral viewpoints, of students rights as citizens and the prerogatives of staff, administrators, and school boards. The essay concludes with an examination of the future of student unrest and a discussion of what can and should be done, in cooperation with students, to help solve the problem. Also included are three case histories of educators who have experienced student militancy and a 26-item bibliography. (Author)

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Prepared by:

James House
William Miller
Wayne County Intermediate
School District
Detroit, Michigan

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Associate Editors:
Jule Crume
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Charles Gengler
Harold Stauffer

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RESPONDING TO STUDENT UNREST:
A GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS

PREFACE

Student unrest is a growing and frightening phenomenon. Its impact is seen daily at the college level. Now a major target is the secondary school. High school students are becoming more sensitive to the lack of relevance in much of the curriculum and feel they have a right to participate in decisions which affect them.

Change and a new emphasis on the rights of the individual are sweeping the nation. "The establishment," (including many secondary schools), often has not responded rapidly enough or positively to these new trends. This is a major reason for the militancy and unrest that has become so much a part of the American scene. Unless workable ways are found to make schools responsive to student needs and to help education become a force to help eliminate the causes of alienation and unrest, our institutions may perish.

The aim of this essay is to help educators understand, respond to, and survive student militancy. Chapter One analyzes the problem of student unrest.

Programs for reducing militancy are discussed in Chapter Two. Why student involvement is a necessity, how it helps accomplish the purposes of education, stimulates interest, and reduces dropouts and alienation, is the subject of Chapter Three. A compendium of youth involvement ideas is presented in Chapter Four.

Three case histories of educators who have experienced student militancy make up Chapter Five. In Chapter Six, students' rights as citizens, and the prerogatives of staff, administrators, and school boards are discussed from both a legal and a moral viewpoint.

The final portion of the essay examines the future of student unrest and discusses what can and should be done, in cooperation with students, to help solve the problem.

There is an urgent need to recognize, analyze, and work to reduce student unrest. The prevailing trend toward attempting to control student behavior through more stringent rules or the use of force will only serve to heighten the problem. We must strike at the very roots of the problem--student alienation, more relevant curricula, and more responsive institutions.

Armed with knowledge, proper strategy, and a positive attitude, the school staff can handle confrontation and work successfully with students to help high schools become more effective.

CHAPTER I

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

School educators are being challenged as never before. The problems of student activism and unrest among youth are being increasingly a concern in our nation's high schools. Administrators are being called on to deal with issues and face confrontations for which they have little or no experience. As a first response the troubled educator is likely to seize upon the short term, simple solution of "getting tough" and strive to "nip disruption in the bud." This is done in the belief that the unrest is an isolated instance that won't last or reoccur. This is evidently a vain hope. A recent and extensive study of urban high schools conducted by Syracuse University revealed that 85 percent of the schools had experienced disruption.[1] The report also stated that "some degree of pathological unrest in our urban schools" would continue for an extended period of time. The study pointed out that the larger the school, the more likely disruption is to occur. Disruption was also found to be strongly related to desegration. All white or all black schools are not so prone to experience problems. Schools with higher percentages of black students are less likely to be disrupted if a high percentage of the staff is black.

[1]Bailey, Stephen K. Disruption in Urban Secondary Schools National Association of Secondary School Principals, Washington, D.C., Nov. 1970, 66pp.

Many principals who have been spared the anguish have indicated they fully expect student unrest. In addition, student activism is not limited to the senior high school. More than fifty percent of all junior high schools in a National Association of Secondary School Principals' study reported protests.[1]

It is assumed, in many instances, that only the black and the poor are at the roots of the upheaval in secondary schools. A careful analysis indicates that large proportions of all students feel change is needed. In fact, some of the more militant protesters are bright pupils from high status backgrounds. Research has shown that leaders and participants in student disruption most often come from prosperous, well educated and politically active families.[2] It is theorized that such youth feel secure economically and personally and are willing to express their views. Student protest can occur in the affluent suburban school, in rural settings, or in an inner-city poverty area.

A study of rebellious high schoolers by The Center for Cognitive Learning at the University of Wisconsin can help us better understand who the protesting students are

[1]Trump, Lloyd L. and Jane Hunt, "The Nature and Extent of Student Activism". Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, No. 337, Washington, D.C. May, 1969, pp 150-51.

[2]Thomas, Lamar E., "Family Congruence on Political Orientations in Politically Active Parents and Their College-Age Children". Changing Education, Summer-Fall, 1968.

and why they dissent.[1] The researcher's findings do not support several popular beliefs. They found that social class origin is not a major determiner of student misbehavior. Boys of average intelligence had the highest rate of misbehavior. One hopeful finding is that strong, secure leaders are not generally inclined to rebellion (nor are social isolates). It is the student with only a small following among his peers who, through challenging authority, hopes to enhance his leadership position.

Alienation from school (even in small, all-white communities) usually precedes both failure and rebellion.

The study dealt mostly with boys' behavior but girls rebel too. It was found that girls do not confront the authorities of the school as do boys. Girls are more likely to join others in a collective evasion of school rules.

It should be understood that there are degrees of student militancy. The youth who believe that schools are so corrupt that the institution should be destroyed represent a very small minority. In fact, they are sometimes agitators from outside the student body. Rebels and activists also represent a relatively small group which probably will not flourish unless there are issues which they can use to galvanize student opposition to authority. Most pupils,

[1] Hagstrom, Warren O. and Leslie L.H. Gardner, Characteristics of Disruptive High School Students. Technical Report No. 96 Center for Cognitive Learning, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

although not militant, are increasingly interested in having changes take place in their schools. It will be fruitful to understand why student unrest is on the rise.

Why Student Unrest?

The problem of student unrest cannot be looked at in isolation. It must be recognized that unrest is becoming more common in all phases of American life. The civil rights protests resulted in some significant gains. College campus activism has had high visibility. Expressions of ethnic and racial pride are becoming more common and dissatisfaction with the status quo is growing. In this climate it is not surprising to see schools, as a part of society, increasingly becoming the scene of unrest.

To be realistic it must be admitted that the issue of black-white relations and confrontations in our society and in our schools has become a major concern. Black-white encounters and, to a lesser degree, ethnic confrontations and demonstrations are responsible for much school unrest. It should be recognized that students from differing backgrounds often come together for the first time in the secondary school. Because of housing segregation and the neighborhood school concept at the elementary level, pupils often do not have the opportunity to learn how to relate to individuals who differ from them culturally and racially. The fact that confrontation results when unprepared pupils come together is not surprising.

Another contributing factor is the racist nature of much of our population and many of our institutions, including (unfortunately) our secondary schools. The minority pupils often come from powerless sections of the community. They are often alienated by their inability to get change and recognition. They resent the schools' almost total orientation to white middle class values. Thus far the schools' only means of responding to the problem is to attempt through its curriculum to "melt down" the culturally different youth and recast him in the mold of the white middle class image. Growing pride in race causes resistance to this approach and demands better ways of dealing with the issue.

Parents and pupils, whether black or white, want quality education and the opportunity to attend school in safety. In some high schools student safety is a serious problem. Some schools have hired private guards or have uniformed or plain clothed policemen in the halls or on the campus. Some principals, desperate to exclude outside troublemakers, have chained doors closed, to the distress of the fire marshall. Obviously, solutions must be found to the mounting problems of school management.

The mass media has increased our awareness of the extent of student protest in the secondary schools. Now, the professional educator must be wise enough to plan strategies that will relieve the pressures created by student activists. If student activism can be understood and channeled

into a positive force, the professional educator will be relieved of many of the problems he faces in his day to day operation. First, it is vital that the issues underlying student unrest be clearly delineated. In the past, school aged youth were receptive to adult values, interested in "making it" in terms of our materialistic society. Now self-fulfillment and a better, more fair, more rational world is what they value. Students are no longer willing to conform--to do irrelevant things just to be admitted to the adult society. They are searching for something more from education — something more personal.

Today's youth are trying to understand and discover themselves -- to become!

Looking at a large scale study of pupils' values can help us better understand their thinking.[1] The investigation found that pupils' personal values changed little, if any, during high school years. Students who were identified as most popular were hedonistic, while those defined as rejected had significantly higher scores on future-time-orientation. The researcher points out that this phenomenon helps explain the popularity of the "now generation" attitude. The characteristics which students sought in their future occupations were particularly revealing. Youth want their occupations to

[1] Thompson, O.E., "Student Values in Transition". California Journal of Educational Research, Volume 19, March, 1968.

be interesting, to permit self expression, to provide security, and to give them an opportunity to help others. They rejected characteristics of leadership and being boss.

The issues as students enunciate them may be unclear, confused, contradictory as they struggle to pinpoint a justification for their actions. Therein may lie the reason for the increased use of drugs and the more liberal attitudes toward sex as students insist on "doing their own thing"! The major goal appears to be a desire for real and honest involvement.

Even though student protest seems to be widespread across the nation, the incidents which trigger the unrest are different in each school. There is no one formula that can be used in each situation. The obvious question that must be asked is, "Why are they protesting?" There are several ingredients that are contained in all of the student unrest problems.

Students are speaking out for a more relevant high school curriculum. They are saying that they want a school program which is responsive to current problems on the American scene. Students are the "now generation," and they want to study and understand the forces around them. The issue of relevance is crystallized in many different ways in secondary schools. In some schools there is student concern about course content -- black studies, sex education, drug use and abuse, as well as extra curricular activities. In still other instances the issues appear to focus on student schedules, grouping of pupils, teaching methods and techniques. Many times the issue or concern is not important; it merely reflects a general unhappiness of students with their status in school.

Students are demanding relevancy because too often the high school curriculum is geared for college-bound students. They resent the rigidity and stigma of the track system. A high school graduation certificate that has been earned by acquiring academic credits does not assure a student a spot in the world of work.

This is particularly true if you are black or poor or both. A study of the inner city graduates in one major school system revealed that only five percent of the graduates had been placed in colleges, jobs, or job training programs. More than 50 percent of the dropouts had found employment![1]

In spite of the highly skilled and technological society in which we live today, vocational training is practically non-existent in many high school curriculums. Students no longer accept the concept of the aristocracy of certain subject matter such as Latin and advanced algebra. Students feel these courses may have nothing to do with college success or with what the student intends to do upon graduation. Available research supports this view! Above all, in

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[1] Fogel, Helen, "Don't Be a Pool -- Stay in School -- Then What?" The Detroit Free Press. Sunday, June 29, 1969.

the minds of youth, a relevant curriculum implies that the learner will have a voice in determining what that curriculum shall be.

Students are dissatisfied with school rules and regulations. Students feel that it is unfair to live by rules that they had no part in establishing. Most secondary schools have regulations relative to the wearing of personal apparel, length of hair, scheduling of activities, use of lockers, as well as discipline. Pupils and parents, in some instances, have called upon the courts to render decisions regarding student rights. These decisions will have far reaching implications for educators. As an example, where pupils have won the right to dress as they choose, there has been little noticeable change in pupil dress or behavior.

Students would be the last to say that all rules and regulations should be eliminated. However, they strongly reject those regulations that are designed to degrade them and suggest that they are not to be trusted. It is increasingly evident that today's young people are not willing to accept authority without question. They want to know the reasons for rules and regulations. Most of all, pupils feel they or their representatives should be able to challenge those rules and regulations that are punitive.

Students are concerned with social and political issues. The advent of the earlier age of majority has heightened this interest. Educators have for years tried

to develop pupil interest in this vital area. In some ways, the present student unrest is positive evidence of the fact that our educational system has been effective. We have stressed democracy, the ideals of a free nation, the need to "stand for something" and the necessity of acting on beliefs rather than just talking. This, essentially, is what today's youth are doing. In a way, we can be proud of our success -- they know about the rights of the individual and they are demanding them. They recognize the social inequities and are working to remedy them. Youth fail to understand how a large segment of the population can live in misery and depression during a period of apparent abundance. They do not understand why our institutions, including secondary schools, disregard the study of racism and all of its implications. Students see inequities in social and economic justice, where democracy is often measured in terms of who you are and whether you can afford the legal costs for an adequate defense. Other youth are concerned about the war in VietNam. They call it unnecessary and immoral.

Even though these issues seldom generate enough interest to close a school, they are on the minds of youth and should be debated in school. Students are, in fact, more aware and conscious of the real problems in life than they have ever been before. However, students often feel powerless as they attempt to find answers to questions dealing with social and political issues. Secondary schools where the

curriculum encourages students to come to grips with real issues have the capability to correct this situation.

Students want to be involved in making key decisions which affect their lives. This concern transcends all areas. Students feel that when the real decisions are made which concern them, they are not included in the process.

Louis Harris and Associates Inc., renowned pollsters, conducted 2500 exhaustive interviews with pupils, parents, and educators.[1] Mr. Harris reports:

> "The key to what is going on among high school students today is that a majority clearly want to participate more in deciding their future. They are willing to be taught, but not to be told. They are willing to abide by rules, but they will not abide by rules which put them down. They are aware of the need for authority, but not impressed by it for its own sake. They are excited by the prospect of living in a fast-changing modern society and they want their high school education to help prepare them for it -- not for some society of the past."

The study shows that a full 66 percent want to participate in determining school rules and curriculum. Almost half feel they should be involved in determining disciplinary measures and in running classes. A majority of students have strong views on these points, rating them "very important."

Educators must admit that students are to some degree a wasted human resource because they are not used effectively in resolving school related problems. Students want to be involved because they believe that their ideas have value

1 "What People Think About Their High Schools" Life, Volume 66, Number 19, May 16, 1969. pp. 23-41.

in determining what is being taught as well as how it is to be taught. They view themselves as a screen through which new ideas that have not been programmed should be passed. In fact, they believe that schools should teach students the art of becoming involved in decision-making. They want to learn these skills in the real everyday experiences of school living.

Active and full participation by youth in the decision-making process will enhance their development of leadership capabilities. It should be remembered that there must not be involvement for involvement sake, but rather because it is the most productive way to use the skills and talents of a forgotten segment of our population — our youth.

Students want to be treated as worthy human beings. A factor which creates some student unrest is the lack of trust and respect by adults. Students want educators to behave toward them in a courteous and respectful manner. They want teachers who "know their subject," but don't value it above the students they teach. It is likely that a sizable part of the student unrest problem can be linked to a feeling on the part of pupils that adults do not care about them or trust them. Where there is a lack of trust, you can expect to find more control. Tight control of students signals lack of trust and a vicious cycle is established where friction is intensified and unrest escalates. In some instances, pupils are critical of teachers and administrators who do not have the decency to speak out when students are abused. This may be caused by

pressures from fellow teachers or insecurity in the profession. Youth need the security of knowing that they are respected and someone cares about them.

The Structure Of The Institution Contributes To Unrest

Students are aware and concerned that "the system" is often discriminatory. Depersonalization, unfair treatment, and punitiveness have often contributed to the number of drop-outs and are increasingly causing the "shove out." Sad to say, youngsters are encouraged to leave, informally "counseled out," or "temporarily" suspended never to return. This often happens for vague and undefined violations, yet youngsters have little, if any, recourse or opportunity for due process.

Two school administrators have raised a very discomforting question. They ask, "Is the structure of the public schools a major factor in causing student unrest?"[1] They answer this question in an equally startling manner. They draw parallel with sociologist Erving Goffman's study of asylums:

The authors make the point that as organizations become bureaucratized it becomes extremely difficult for those within the organization to see the organization as a whole or to analyze it. They indicate that school administrators are no exception. They feel we may be prone to blame students and parents for our problems rather than to honestly look at our structure as a possible cause of student rebellion.

[1]Newton W. Fenk and Benjamin Gullers. "Student Unrest--Structure of the Public Schools a Major Factor?". The Clearing House. Volume 44, No. 7, March, 1970. pp.415-419.

They use Goffman's model and definitions as described in his book Asylums to analyze schools.[1] They admit the model does not fit the public schools perfectly, but it comes uncomfortably close! Goffman describes a total institution as a ". . .place of residence and work where a large number of like situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered type of life."

Three primary characteristics of institutions were identified by Goffman. First, in institutions the social roles of the majority of members are almost completely undifferentiated. Activities are carried out in the same location under the same supervision. (In schools, for the most part, the day is rigidly scheduled, and supervision of the same groups is carried out by the same teachers.) The pattern of the institution is designed and imposed from a higher level. A key aim is to amass large blocks of people in a situation where surveillance and control is made possible.

A second major characteristic is the echelon principle of control. Rather than a hierarchy which contains a chain interlocking duties and rights, institutions are established on the basis that any member of the staff or supervisory group has the right to discipline any member of the organization below them. (Any member of a school staff may at any time

[1]Erving Goffman, Asylums, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1961.

discipline any member of the student body.) Goffman's work revealed that this type of control produces chronic anxiety. He points out that the institutional model is well designed for custody and control but not for the rehabilitation or education of individuals necessary to integrate them into our society.

The third characteristic of a total institution is the basic split between the large managed group and the smaller supervisory staff. In an institution with "binary characteristics" the goals of the majority of the members of the institution differ greatly from the goals of the staff. It is pointed out that youngsters are not satisfied with the purposes of the school as conceived by administrators, teachers, and parents.

Students are responding to this split in many ways -- formation of sub-cultures, withdrawal, criticism of the school, unrest, rebellion, and violence.

It is often difficult for adults, and especially educators, to understand why youngsters attempt rebellion. They obviously have a sizable and powerful establishment against them and are unlikely to have their dissent result in significant institutional change. The parallel with Goffman's model of the institution may help explain the reasons. In what seems to the individual to be a depersonalized and intolerably rigid environment (under the domination of tyrants), rebellion, even against great odds, is not a surprising response. Look at

prison uprisings. Such attempts are almost never successful but an individual, in an attempt to maintain his humaness, will fight an institution which alienates him. The implications for school administrators warrant careful consideration.

The authors of the article strongly question the present structure of secondary schools. They feel a total institution model may fit immature children but as children mature, they need an organization which is flexible and versatile -- a goal which most secondary schools have not reached.

Needed--A Clearer Definition Of Secondary Education

An issue that is at the roots of student unrest is our lack of understanding of the real function of the secondary schools. Pupils are aware of confusion about educational goals and conclude that we don't know our business. Principals and teachers must have clearly in their minds the goals and objectives of the secondary schools. Otherwise, they may not see the real concerns of pupils as an important part of their goal structure. Both students and parents may be used effectively in suggesting appropriate functions of the secondary schools.

Conclusion

These are but a few of the active ingredients behind the causes of student unrest. It also should be recognized

that a part of the disruption is embedded in the nature of the American society in which we live. During the past decade there has been a plethora of dissident adult groups (including teachers) who have demonstrated and made demands on behalf of various interests. This whole feeling of anxiety in our society is related to the VietNam war, inflation, racism, and a lack of confidence in the leadership of our country. It is little wonder that the youth of today mirror the general tone of the society. This student concern can be a positive force if educators will listen and use pupil unrest as a means of humanizing and improving the educational experience for all youth.

The Harris poll mentioned earlier reveals another vitally important finding. The teacher is respected! Youth and their parents have affection for the teacher. Harris believes that the educator is the catalyst for bridging the generation gap. His study shows teachers are more anxious than anyone to improve the learning climate and educational standards. On the question of discipline there is a student-teacher alliance. It is the parent with his emphasis on conformity and punitiveness who is not in step. He concludes, "More than one would think, students and teachers are satisfied with each other, but not as much with the way the schools are run." "...If high schools are to draw abreast of the times and help achieve understanding between the generations, our

best hope lies with the teachers."[1]

It is clear that the youth are ready to help improve the schools. The professional educator has the support, respect, and know-how required. Let's grasp the opportunity!

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1 Ibid pp. 27.

CHAPTER II

TACKLING THE PROBLEM (BEFORE IT TACKLES YOU!)

In the previous chapter an attempt was made to highlight the issues and problems that have caused student ferment. Obviously, there are others that should be considered such as adult agitators and those students, in and out of school, who are waiting in the wings to cause trouble. There is, however, enough legitimate evidence to indicate that something is wrong. If this is true, where do you start looking for answers? How do you tackle the problem before it tackles you?

Where To Start

Here are some things that you can do! It may be necessary to use multiple approaches, but most of all-- do something! The community, the school setting, availability of resources, finances, and staff are some of the areas to examine as you initiate change to blunt the move toward greater student militancy.

- Look At Yourself -

At first glance it may appear to be rather trite to suggest taking a careful look at yourself. However, educators in key leadership positions are expected to make decisions in sensitive areas where they have had little, if any, experience. Your administrative style may be doomed to failure

because you are unable to take the kind of risks that are required to cope with a particular situation. Some administrators are unwilling to make decisions that they know are essential for reducing the incidence of student unrest because of fear. There is the realistic fear of losing one's job as well as the fear of losing power.

You should start by asking yourself tough questions such as:

1. Am I threatened by the demands of students?
2. Can I cope with the rhetoric of those who are angry?
3. Are there areas where students have legitimate concerns?
4. Do I have enough skills and knowledge to initiate and effectively carry on negotiations to resolve student unrest?
5. Do I feel comfortable sharing power?
6. Am I a racist?
7. Am I flexible and willing to accept change?
8. What can I do that would improve the learning climate before violence and hostility develop?

It is impossible to make viable decisions for others if you find it difficult to scrutinize your own weaknesses as well as your strengths. District-wide or university based retraining programs may assist you in deciding whether or not you wish to continue work in that phase of the education arena that includes dealing with student unrest. You should talk honestly with fellow educators that you trust and explain your dilemma. There have been too many good high school

administrators who have taken sick leaves or sabbaticals because they could not deal honestly with themselves. This need not happen to you.

Both teachers and administrators need to carefully analyze how they spend their time each day. It can be a startling experience to find that a significant period can be spent responding and reacting to pressures, rather than developing and initiating challenging experiences for youth.

The value of sensitivity training has been questioned; however, with effective trainers such experiences can help educators review their personal behavior. As you review the allocation of your time, it may suggest a new array of priorities that will result in maximizing learning for all students.

- Look At The Curriculum -

Another place to start is to examine the curriculum in your school. It appears that teenagers are asking for a review of the curriculum in its global meaning. Wiles' definition of the curriculum would be acceptable to youth as he states:

> "The curriculum for a child consists of all the experiences that are provided for him by the school -- all of the factors in his environment which are a part of the school day. It consists of his out-of-school experiences which the school uses in developing understandings and skills. In this sense, the curriculum may consist of fights on the school grounds, of smiles from the

> teacher, of the spirit that prevails in the school, of the cafeteria and the way food is served, of the art in the hallways, of the color in the classrooms, and of all the things that go to make up living in the school. Any attempt to improve the curriculum will have to be an attempt to improve living in a particular school.[1]"

Students become excited about a reshaped curriculum that is relevant and challenging. They want a curriculum responsive to the current sociological problems. They want a curriculum that will "speak out" and give them direction in such areas as poverty, racism, black studies, sex, drugs, and the war in VietNam. Students want a curriculum that will help them deal with political systems. They need to know how the "real" decisions are made in this country. Students want a curriculum that is flexible and dynamic, and one that they have a voice in molding.

Some phases of the curriculum have been in a state of change. Federal support has been directed toward improving mathematics, science and foreign languages. Some academic disciplines have been reorganized and updated. A few new courses such as Afro-American history, humanities and social problems have been added to the curriculum. However, the primary changes have focused on the disciplines, rather than the child or his society.

As you review the curriculum, you should seek the cooperation of parents and students to assist in identifying

[1]Wiles, Kimball, The Changing Curriculum of the American High School. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963, p.16.

soft spots in the school program. Follow-up studies of graduates and school leavers are also essential. Leaders in the business community may help chart new directions for the curriculum. If you believe that the curriculum is everything that is done in school, then you must look at all phases of school life. Curriculum evaluation should be a continuous process.

There are many models that you may examine as you seek solutions to problems related to the curriculum. You may want to organize a district-wide ad hoc curriculum council that would serve strictly in an advisory capacity. Or you may limit the curriculum council to the building level. Some forward-looking school districts have employed students as curriculum advisors. In still other instances, system-wide community councils have elected pupils to key leadership positions with equal power to adults. You may also choose to permit students to experiment with free form education. Mini-courses may be explored and made a regular part of the curriculum. Many options are open to you. Every available means must be used that will cause educators to look at those factors that excite pupils about learning.

As you review the curriculum, it becomes obvious that pupils are expected to learn more and more in the various disciplines. Research and technology are constantly adding to the pool of knowledge. Some pupils may reject the pressures of these mind expanding activities. Educators are

also challenging the notion that all content is essential for all pupils. The most helpful approach may be to focus on teaching crucial cognitive processes. This cognitive process, which could be applied to any discipline, may include skills in stating behavioral objectives, selecting experiences and media to achieve these objectives, and evaluating progress toward achieving the behavioral objectives. In this way, the content could be personalized for each student.

A phase of the curriculum that warrants special attention is the non-class activities. Even though these programs appear to be well established in secondary schools, educators cannot agree on the objectives, goals, and purposes of the co-curricular program. If an activity program is to be vital, every effort must be made to reduce the rivalry that exists between the formal curricular and the non-class activities. Students want to find enrichment and participation outside of the regular classroom. Schwartz says that they will not find it because:

> "A student must learn to participate in a student government which has no inherent power, with a student newspaper which is subject to censorship, with student organizations which offer little challenge to creativity, intellect or ingenuity. He intuitively represses any desire to change his surroundings, and when he asks for the most minimal change, he makes sure to be as deferential, humble, and "responsible" as possible. And if he wants to succeed, he learns to accept the school's standards for success."[1]

[1]Schwartz, Edward, "Deplore, But Then What?" Paper read before the meeting of the Education Writers' Association, New York, February 16, 1968, p.5. (mimeographed)

This indictment by Schwartz may be valid. A review of the research on student activities during the past decade indicates the relative low esteem of non-class activity. This is indeed an area that you will want to examine as a possible means of tackling the problem of student dissatisfaction.

- Encourage Staff Self-Examination And Growth -

You will want to look at the secondary school staff in an effort to reduce student militancy. Students want teachers who are both understanding and knowledgeable, teachers who feel comfortable with pupils helping to give direction to the class. If a class engages only in discussion and answering the questions at the end of each chapter, then something is gravely missing in the educative process. Students know what activities "turn them on"; teachers need only to ask.

You will want to review the skills of your staff very carefully. Can the staff actually teach what needs to be taught? Each staff member should be encouraged to ask himself if he can work effectively with the poor, minorities, or alienated youth. If you know that a member of your staff is weak in certain skills, it is essential that you provide the personal help that is needed for his improvement, rather than making a general indictment of the total staff. It is necessary to start with the assumption that teachers want to

do a better job of improving learning for students. Consequently, a good place to start is by asking them what kind of help they need.

If you discover that problems exist among the secondary school personnel, then staff self improvement is a viable weapon. New tools are being developed which will help the professional staff to look at themselves with a clearer eye. Micro-teaching techniques and sensitivity training are but two examples. Other staff development activities may focus on teacher-pupil relations and a better understanding of youth. This inservice activity should be conducted on a regular basis, whatever the content or methods. Don't wait until a crisis occurs. By then, it will be too late!

- Initiate New Organizational Plans -

Another option that should be reviewed in reducing student militancy is a careful analysis of the organizational structure in the high school. Some large high schools have explored the "school within a school" concept. In some schools grade levels become self-contained units in one segment of a building, sharing facilities such as the auditorium, gymnasium and the media center. In other buildings the organization is vertical with, for instance, grades 10, 11, and 12 in one "house". The aim of this arrangement is to help students to identify with, and become a part of, the smaller unit.

Your present organizational plan may not provide for additional staffing patterns. Some schools have become more functional by adding people with unique skills in working with youth. The position of "Coordinator of Student Activities" has been successful in some schools, particularly if the coordinator has not been tied to resolving discipline problems and has been housed away from the office of authority figures. Other schools have added an ombudsman to resolve student concerns. In still other instances, a home/school counselor has bridged the gap between the student at home and at school.

The tempo for an alternative education appears to be on the increase. In some schools, a completely separate facility is provided away from the school setting. It may or may not be tied to the parent school. Those teachers and students who find the regular school learning activities and time schedule too inflexible may be encouraged to develop an alternative education under the same roof.

Modular and flexible scheduling is also being used to make more effective use of time during the school day. This scheduling arrangement makes possible the use of large and small group techniques as well as team teaching. Frequently associated with modular and flexible scheduling is independent study, programmed instruction, and the extensive use of media centers. Examine these organizational arrangements as an answer to resolving student unrest.

- Upgrade Your Communications -

A comprehensive evaluation should be made of your communications network. Many times problems will result because you lack information. There should be a grievance procedure - a system of redress. This procedure should be known by all students in school and show no favorites. The communications link is strengthened as parents and students get a chance to be heard. Provisions should be made for minority opinions to be aired. Maintain an open door policy; make it a point each day to talk with a student that you don't know. The talk should be informal. Examine your administrative style; check to see if the information flow is two ways, not from the top down.

Don't ignore newsletters to parents and the community. Some principals have formal student advisory groups. Others make a practice of breakfasting or lunching regularly with an on-going group of youth who are responsible for channeling student concerns to the administration. Remember the best communicator of the school's impact is the individual student who reports his feelings, problems, and successes to his parents daily.

- Increase The Governing Power Of Students -

If learning is to become a personal thing, then those who are the consumers must make decisions about their own affairs. Students must be trained to assume this responsibility.

We have for too long jealously guarded the educational process as our private domain. Students should be permitted to review the goals of education with parents and educators. They should know the role of their high school and what an education should offer. It is only then that they will be able to help us determine what their learning shall be.

We must increase the governing power of students because only students can speak to the concerns of students. In fact, students may possess some expertise and perspectives for providing new and creative solutions to our problems. Students will be concerned about the authenticity of their power. If it is not real and binding power, then you should not engage in gamesmanship with them. Student governing power may permit students to help select school personnel, evaluate their teachers, select their own textbooks, conduct student surveys, and serve as representatives on student discipline councils.

One knowledgeable educator suggests that, if a principal wants to tackle the problem before it tackles him, he should take immediate action on the following items:

1. Eliminate the dress code and weed out unnecessary rules.
2. Organize a "Forum for Controversy."
3. Organize a faculty inservice course on "Individual differences."
4. Let students select their own learning groups.

5. Add elective courses.
6. Help teachers provide diversity of media and material.
7. Work with teachers in providing content options.
8. Show teachers how to develop self-instructional materials.
9. Provide independent study time for all students.
10. Schedule small groups for every discipline.[1]

Conclusion

These and other approaches may be useful in reducing student militancy. It probably will take a combination of these factors and others applied with commitment, skill, and sincerity to get the job done. The most powerful tool to fight unrest and alienation is youth involvement. Youth involvement procedures are so important that all of their aspects, implications and dimensions will be outlined in the next chapter.

[1] Glatthorn, Allan A., "Individual Self-Fulfillment in the Large High School". The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Vol. 53, March, 1969. p.56.

CHAPTER III

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT: A KEY TO PREVENTING MILITANCY

There is very little understanding or agreement among educators concerning the term "youth involvement." When many teachers and administrators received their formal college preparation, training for youth involvement was not a part of their professional training. Some textbooks referred to student participation with little, if any, concern about the reasons for or the quality of that participation.

What Is Youth Involvement?

Youth involvement is viewed by some people as those selected school activities in which some students are permitted to participate. In such cases pupils have little, if any, power to effect change as a result of the activity. As an example, pupils are permitted to have a student council but the total veto power rests with the sponsor and the principal. Activities recommended by the council are non-negotiable. Others view youth involvement as those procedures which enable all youth to participate in all areas of school living with shared power in effecting change. For example, if the student council wanted to evaluate teacher effectiveness or add courses that would make the curriculum more relevant, a viable process is available to bring about these changes. In fact, pupils would be encouraged to use the process as an important part of receiving their education. As you can see, in the second

definition, students are a valuable part in developing programs and dispensing services that are real and relevant for them. The quality of the involvement is the key to its success.

Why Do We Need Student Participation?

Youth involvement procedures are a means of reducing student unrest and rebellion. Youth participation, or a lack of it, is an issue in all secondary schools across the nation. Currently high schools are experiencing walkouts, sit-ins, boycotts or other means of student expression in their demand for more involvement. A careful analysis of this protest movement indicates that many student demands and concerns are legitimate. In the area of involvement we need a complete evaluation of how we relate to youth. Youth involvement can be accomplished at little or no cost, but it calls for faith in students and some risk taking. The rewards are worth it.

The United States Office of Education views the involvement of youth as a highly promising means of reducing alienation. As a result, they have earmarked funds to test various models of youth participation. Here is the flavor of their philosophy:

> "The involvement of youth should constitute a central strategy in the nation's effort to develop the potential of its young people and to prevent anti-social behavior. There is a need to recognize the phenomenon of youth culture and provide new and significant ways for youth to be involved with dignity, with meaning, and with impact. The schools,

> the welfare agencies, the youth serving and recreational agencies, employment programs and business, all hold within them opportunity for greater youth participation at many levels."[1]

For far too many years the secondary school operation has been trapped in a web of tradition. The historic role of the learner and the teacher has not been conducive to involvement. The teacher was thought to have all the knowledge and the pupils were viewed as passive receivers of information. We now know that effective learning does not occur in this manner. We also know that today's students are often well informed. Sometimes they have knowledge in areas beyond what the teacher possesses. They are more eager to raise questions, explore options and make value judgments about issues for the love and satisfaction of learning. A wise educator capitalizes on these facts rather than being threatened by them.

We need youth involvement because it is good education. Although many definitions of learning exist, most experts agree (1) that good learning involves a change in behavior, (2) that the behavior persists over a period of time, and (3) that it helps the learner deal more effectively with his environment. Effective learning usually focuses on the learner's goals, is increased if motivation exists, and is an active rather than a passive process. Obviously, when one examines these characteristics, youth involvement can be an important avenue to better

[1] Virginia Burns and Leonard W. Stern, "The Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency", Task Force Report:Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. (Washington:U.S. Government Printing Office,1967) pp. 362-363.

learning.

It has been found that when a learner is dealing with problems and issues which are important and make sense to him, he is more motivated and learns better. We also know that healthy, normal individuals thrive on new experiences. This is what the "NOW" generation has discovered! Interestingly enough, intrinsic motivators (those good feelings a person gets inside when he has accomplished something he sees as important and which people he respects also value) are more effective than extrinsic ones (such as marks or a place on the honor roll). Recognition from peers and from significant others (teachers included) are powerful rewards. Motives for changing behavior (learning) are strongly related to interpersonal relationships. Youth involvement satisfies all these criteria better than most approaches to learning.

Through youth involvement students can help assure that content and activities are relevant. The process of involvement can increase motivation and the motivation can be better maintained because what is being studied and the way in which it is studied will make sense to him. Involvement heightens interpersonal interaction and can set the stage for rewards that are intrinsic and effective. Youth participation in planning learning experiences is more likely to result in activities being "action oriented," thus making learning an active rather than passive process.

Youth involvement is needed because students have a

significant contribution to make. Youth involvement is needed so that we can bring to bear a wide range of experiences and perceptions in resolving educational issues. An idea presented by youth should be judged on its merit, not on the basis of the age of the contributor. During the past hundred years there has been a striking tendency for the time of adolescence to be earlier and for the whole process of growth to be speeded up. This process is continuing, yet the school and society has successfully made the adolescent less mature. Because society successfully keeps youth from growing up, it is extremely difficult for the teenager in today's world, not knowing his real status in school and society.

It is rather sobering to realize that the median age of the nation's population is near twenty-five years of age. It makes little sense to permit a sizable part of the population to be dormant because of the age factor. Student involvement, regardless of age, can convert destructive activism into real accomplishment if the unbound energy and power of youth can be used to solve problems. Today's high school student is ready to take on responsibility; he's interested in today's world; and he has skills and wants additional know-how to solve the problems which are all around him.

Youth should participate because it is their right to do so. Since our public schools are democratic institutions, they must concern themselves with the ways of a democracy.

It is essential that a democratic education uses democratic procedures. A democracy must test new strategies that will enhance a deeper participation by representatives from all segments of the society. If students are to be invited to become an eventual part of the American dream, they must see schools as a living example of that dream. A democratic education takes into consideration the basic civil rights of all people who are affected by a decision. One way to practice that democracy in secondary schools is to realistically involve youth in all phases of the school experience.

The courts have ruled that young people are citizens and have the same rights as adults. The right to help govern an institution to which an individual belongs is a traditional and proper expectation in America. Moreover, there is research support from business, industry, and education for involving individuals in decisions which affect them. Participation has been shown to increase productivity, improve morale, and aid understanding and support of the organization of which they are a part.

We need youth involvement because when students are alienated the seeds for student dropouts are sown. Even though the percentage of school dropouts has been reduced, the total number has increased alarmingly. There is also concern for those youth who are pushed out of school because of their activist role. Some students that have been labeled as trouble-makers receive undue pressure and leave school regardless of

their academic potential. Dropouts are a societal problem, as well as an economic one. There appears to be little doubt that a significant number of dropouts become delinquents. This pattern makes it easy to understand why it is essential that student alienation be reduced by actively involving pupils; in this way there may be a chance to reduce the degree of delinquency and dropouts.

There is an important lesson which has been learned by psychologists who have studied violence against institutions. When dissatisfaction exists, involvement can be an important alternative to exercising greater control. Genuine opportunities for participation can lead to students feeling that they have an investment in the school. They are more likely to obey rules they have had a hand in making. Also, one doesn't destroy that which he feels belongs to him!

Youth need involvement for their personal and social development. Much has been written recently about the importance of helping disadvantaged and minority youth develop an adequate self concept. They must be able to say, "This is me, and I am glad!" We know that an adequate self concept is essential for all people, if they are to live a full and effective life. True youth involvement provides nourishment for sustaining the self. Being able to answer the question, "Who am I? What are my strengths and weaknesses?", is a major goal of adolescence. Youth involvement is essential so that all students have a chance at risk taking -- a sometimes

dangerous, but always serious, undertaking. Students must learn very early in school that no one is perfect; we all grow and develop from our mistakes. It is impossible to learn risk taking merely through reading. Real experiences must be provided. The secondary school is in a unique position to provide these experiences.

Education should liberate pupils from the "apron strings" of adults. This is achieved as students learn the art of self-discipline. Only then are we able to observe a real difference in pupil performance. Students must assume the responsibility for their own learning. In this way learning becomes more lasting and meaningful. There is no more rewarding way to stimulate interest in school. As youth assume responsibility, they get a chance to develop their own unique and individual skills.

Youth involvement is necessary, realistic, and in tune with the times. There is no more visible characteristic of modern life today than individuals and groups demanding a larger voice in matters that concern them. Civil rights, women's rights, teachers' rights -- all have been sought and, to some degree, gained. It is not surprising that youth should be concerned with an opportunity to help make decisions about school matters.

Honest involvement is what is sought. Tokenism will not be stood for in the search for representation. A major premise is that no one person (or elite group) can be trusted

to run an institution in the best interest of everyone. Both teachers and students have demonstrated they feel that schools are no exception. Since teachers are so active in support of their own rights, they should be understanding about students' concerns for their prerogatives.

Youth participation has value for teachers and administrators. Student involvement can help make the curriculum and teaching more vital and cause school to be a more exciting place to be. Youngsters are full of ideas -- good ideas about what should be done and how to do it. Involvement of youth, parents and other citizens can help increase support for schools and help assure that the school is a relevant institution. A long term program of community participation (not the money oriented "get out the vote" effort) can build real support for needed programs.

A climate where everyone's contribution is valued is a more pleasant place to work. There is a saying that if your aim is to hold another man down, you must stay down with him. A repressive school is usually repressive for teachers as well as students. Time spent disciplining or controlling students can be reduced through creating a situation where mutual respect, self discipline and working toward commonly accepted goals is the practice. Youth involvement is a key technique for establishing such a milieu.

These are but a few of the reasons why we need youth involvement procedures in secondary schools. Perhaps your

community and school will suggest additions to this listing. We hope so. The success of youth involvement procedures is determined by the quality and genuineness of that involvement. Parents, teachers and administrators possess the key to initiating such involvement and can help assure the quality of that experience.

How Do You Begin To Involve Youth?

To be successful in initiating student participation you must first convince yourself that sharing power and involving youth is a fruitful venture -- that it is worth the work and the risk. You must be willing to negotiate differences and initiate a standard grievance procedure that all students have access to and understand. If this is not done, then the dialogue that will follow will be meaningless.

A second vital step in beginning student participation is to conduct a thorough review of what is currently being done to involve youth in your school. One effective way of doing this is through the cooperative efforts of parents, teachers, students and administrators. Study the results. If there appears to be areas where students are not used, make a quick initial move and involve them. This is a way of instilling trust in youth and to prove that you have faith in them.

Start participation in your school by seeing that:

"Students have a voice in planning, deciding upon, implementing and evaluating experiences in which they participate.

Youth have opportunities to work with other youth and adults in a variety of situations, in a variety of relationships.

Leadership is shared. Youth share with teachers and other adults the responsibility for guiding and leading activities to the reasonable maximum of their potential.

Youth are encouraged to originate plans and ideas for enhancing their role and participation in school and community activities."[1]

In summary, youth involvement is a powerful tool for reducing student militancy. However, it should be remembered that if youth involvement activities are initiated, it follows that all aspects of school living are subject to review and revision. Youth involvement activities are important for teachers and administrators because students can be used as allies in helping to resolve some of the difficult educational problems. Here is an untapped resource just waiting to be used. They are important to educators because problems related to student militancy may be reduced and new and more relevant activities can be initiated in secondary schools.

Monez and Bussiere conclude that we cannot overestimate the importance of the secondary school - it exists for our youth. They say:

"The high school which recognizes that it exists primarily to help each young person in his search for significance and meaning will also recognize that a young person's

[1]Delores Paskal, Leonard S. Demak, Edwin J. McClendon, New Roles and Relationships. (Detroit: Wayne County Intermediate School District, 1969) p.3.

perception is formed as he moves within the school and tests its responsiveness against his own sense of reality.

Youth bring to school each day a very real and personal world which he has put together for himself. He takes from his school experiences, as he does from all his experience, those aspects which have some bearing on his world. Although oriented to the present, he sees his future not only in terms of what is crucial to him now but also in terms of the control he can come to exercise over his future. A young person's test of relevance is centered in his individual searching, his probing and his need to make sense of his environment."[1]

The task of the high school is not impossible nor unreachable. Present student discontent provides us with a golden opportunity to show that we care about youth. Meaningful youth involvement procedures will let our deeds do the talking.

[1]Thornton B. Monez and Norman L. Bussiere, "The High School in Human Terms", Humanizing The Secondary School. (Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1969) p.9.

CHAPTER IV

A COMPENDIUM OF YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IDEAS

If you see value in student participation and seriously wish to initiate some of these practices, where should you start? The descriptive listing of activities which follows will be helpful. They will help open lines of communication and provide a mechanism for youth decision making. They vary in the degree of youth participation and autonomy. An administrator willing to share his power can select an activity which fits his situation.

Some of these activities may be viewed as "risky" or "threatening" to some educational leaders. Isn't it about time to take a few chances for our youth? This is not a complete listing of youth involvement activities.[1] The compendium should be seen as a step toward implementing the unusual opportunity we have to use the talents and energy of youth.

Students As Aides

The first group of youth involvement activities are those in which pupils serve as student aides. These involvement ideas are low risk and non-threatening for the most part.

[1] Many of these activities were developed from: O'Brien, Dan W., Now I Know Why ...". An Educator's Guide for Student Involvement in Learning About Education. (Madison: Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction, May, 1968); Allan A. Glatthorn, The Principal and The Student Council, (Washington, D.C.: The National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1968); Delores Paskal, Leonard S. Demak and Edwin J. McClendon, New Roles and Relationships. (Detroit: Wayne County Intermediate School District, 1969).

They have been "school tested" and these roles will fit in well in most schools. They represent a beginning point for participation.

Classroom Academic Aides -- Under guidance of the classroom teacher, students are used to tutor other students who need assistance. These aides are also used as teaching assistants and discussion leaders.

Many students have unusual academic talents. While helping other students, it provides a unique opportunity for academic aides to test their level of competency. It is hoped that many of these students will select teaching as a life's work.

Clerical Aides in Classrooms -- Pupils lend assistance to those classroom teachers who desire some relief from routines such as recording grades, making bulletin boards, or checking objective test questions.

As students become older and more sophisticated, there is a tendency to reject shallow types of activities. Teachers should watch carefully for this phenomenon.

Evaluation Aides -- Students are trained to help administer and tabulate standardized or class tests. This same group of students can assist their peers in learning the art of test-taking skills. They can also be of assistance in gathering data from students and the community concerning needs, problems, and solutions.

The more talented students may sit on planning teams as budgets are developed for the allocation of funds in crucial

areas of need.

Helpers or Apprentices -- The custodial, cafeteria, maintenance, and grounds personnel have used pupils as assistants. The position may be paid or unpaid.

It may be necessary to check the prevailing attitude of unions in your area if helpers or apprentices are used. The school is ideal for a Co-Op experience.

Office Aides -- Pupils provide whatever assistance may be needed in administrative, counseling, library, and department offices of their school. This role can frequently provide dignity and status for pupils who need it.

The office aide position should be one that is needed and keeps the student reasonably busy in meaningful activities.

Work-Study Programs (Especially needed for Low-Income Youth) -- Students attend classes for part of a day and work on jobs the rest of the time. Pupils receive compensation for this kind of involvement.

Youth As Consultants

The next group of activities focuses on using students as consultants. Before major decisions are made that affect youth, students should provide inputs which can influence that decision. It is essential, if this concept is to work, that suggestions and recommendations are valued and every effort made to implement them. Youth would also work

cooperatively with teachers and administrators in implementing decisions.

Advisors to the Administration (Superintendent and Principal) -- Students meet regularly with the administration to talk and listen. They have a direct pipeline to administration when critical issues were developing. A true cross-section of the student population is necessary to the success of this activity.

Pupils who are selected in this capacity could serve in this role for brief periods of time. In this way a wider variety of pupil voices could be heard.

Advisors to Board of Education -- The student council executive board, and/or students elected schoolwide by their peers, attend all board of education meetings as youth advisors. These students give advice on building design, course offerings, as well as other matters that affect students.

Since the Age of Majority, some youth are vieing for regular positions on the board of education. This activity provides youth with an unusual opportunity to be engaged at the decision making level.

Advisors to School Departments -- Youth meet regularly with department heads and are invited to attend department meetings as youth consultants. Students share their views on course offerings and methodology, as well as other issues which are resolved at the department level.

Students may be particularly insightful in the selection

of media for each department. In fact, they may be helpful in constructing and developing media for a department.

Awards Committee -- Students assist in constructing criteria or guidelines for making student awards. Such a committee reviews all phases of a student awards program, and makes recommdations that would help assure more pupils receive recognition in a wider variety of areas.

Book and Materials Selection -- Students assist in the review and selection of books for their school library as well as the basic textbooks. Student and staff committees would be *ad hoc* in nature, giving those who are knowledgeable about special kinds of materials a chance to participate. A regular budget would be provided the selection committees.

If pupils are engaged in the selection process, they may be encouraged to increase their reading.

Cafeteria Advisors -- Students work in concert with those who are responsible for preparing, planning, and serving food in the cafeteria. Members of this committee are responsive to pupil suggestions for improving all phases of this operation. In many schools, the cafeteria is a center of pupil controversy.

These advisors may also assist in the operation of snack stands that could make available milk and fresh fruit all during the day.

Evaluation Consultants -- Pupils share in evaluating course content, curriculum offerings, teaching methods, and

teacher performance. They also survey their community on issues they feel are significant and make appropriate recommendations regarding their findings. They also gather data about student needs and opinions.

Representatives at Faculty Meetings -- Members from the student council or selected representatives attend all regularly scheduled faculty meetings, serve as consultants, and present the youth point of view when appropriate.

School Calendar Advisors -- Too frequently, the length and timing of holidays and vacation periods are designed to satisfy teachers and administrators. Pupils should be consulted before the master calendar is constructed for the school year.

Sponsor Selection-- Pupils assist in the selection of sponsors for their organizations and clubs. If the size of the school permits, the tenure of a sponsor should be limited to one year. Some sponsors view certain student organizations as their personal domain.

Staff Selection Committees -- Pupils assist in the selection of staff for their building. This is particularly important in the selection of a building principal or his assistant. Involvement of this type may also be helpful to the professional seeking a position since factors other than years of experience and length of time in a district would be taken into account.

At various intervals during the first year of tenure for an administrator, he should again face the staff selection committee to report his actions or inactions.

Student-Faculty Advisory Council -- The elected representatives of students and faculty are charged with the responsibility for initiating dialogue with the administration regarding problems brought to them by students. This council also conducts studies of other identified school-wide problems and makes appropriate recommdations to the proper authorities.

Teacher-Pupil Planning -- Students assist the teacher in determining what is to be taught in the classroom. The learner can frequently suggest critical areas needing attention, as well as interesting and exciting methods and techniques for learning.

Youth As Leaders And Decision Makers

This final group of activities provides for true youth involvement. Students have an opportunity to conduct the activity as well as determining the ground rules. Some of these activities may appear to be threatening to the establishment; however, they give students a chance to make decisions. This is the way you develop responsible youth. How many of these activities are you willing to test in your school?

Cooperatives -- A student group operates a store which is stocked to meet the needs of youth. It might be a book or supply store or carry other goods. The co-op could even

produce items of interest to students or parents much like Junior Achievement.

Counseling Assistants -- Youth conduct group counseling sessions dealing with such items as responsibility and importance of good study habits and assist students who have poor grades. Students who work in this capacity undergo a training period with the regular school counselors. Youth who have overcome behavior, job, or drug problems can be valuable contributors to help save other students from these problems.

Creative Arts Club -- Pupils in such a group delve into creative areas not usually afforded them. They are encouraged, for instance, to write, direct, and produce musical and dramatic presentations. A one-man art show may be a vehicle. Class credit could be awarded for unusual accomplishments even though no sponsor has been in charge. Local artists could be used as a resource to the group.

Cross-Age Tutoring -- Older student volunteers are used to tutor younger ones, usually in another school. This experience can be helpful for both students. Research has shown the tutor gains as well as those being tutored.

You can generally expect positive results from this activity. It has been tried with great success on many occasions.

Free Seminars -- Students initiate and conduct seminars focused on the critical issues in our social order. They

are conducted during the school day, after school, or during the summer. Pupils do not receive grades or credit for this experience. All students are encouraged to participate.

Freedom Schools -- If a group of pupils felt that their school and curriculum was not relevant, and it was not possible for them to operate within the framework of the establishment, they would be supported and encouraged to initiate their own school. A store front nearby could be used for this purpose.

Students attending the Freedom Schools should be permitted to identify the staff members that they want to work with them. A budget for its operation should also be available.

Future Teachers Club -- Students not only explore the job opportunities in the teaching field, but become immersed in local school problems, debate the important issues and suggest the vital changes needed in education. Such a group serves as an advisory committee to nearby universities in an attempt to improve the education of teachers. Trainers of teachers at the university need to hear from the consumers of education.

Human Relations Association -- This organization can be the most important one in school. Pupils in this association direct activities which assist in making all pupils feel that they are an important part of the school. They investigate pupil complaints and make appropriate recommendations to the principal to improve the situation.

Racism, wherever it is found in school, could be actively attacked by this Association.

Open Forum -- A series of open forums are arranged by pupils who have a special interest in the topic under consideration. All pupils have a chance to speak out on such issues as "Black Power," "Racism," and the VietNam War. Forums are held after school or strategically scheduled during the school day.

Political Volunteers -- Interested youth would help to support a political candidate of local, state, and national office. They would help adult volunteers conduct a campaign. Such a student group might also identify issues of importance to youth and lobby for them.

Public Relations Club -- Youth make a concerted effort to report favorable student activities to all groups and media. The aim is to enhance the image of the student and the school. There is an attempt to balance the unfavorable actions of a few students which often receive maximum publicity.

Remedial Activities -- Pupils initiate and conduct remedial classes for those who desire this kind of assistance. This experience can be in their own school or in a school with a large enrollment of educationally deprived children.

Science Fair - Art Exhibit -- Youth organize and sponsor their own science fair, art exhibits, or related activities. Adults in school or the community assist, when needed, in this venture.

Self-Directed Study Programs -- Students direct a program open to all pupils. Students are free to leave class to work on his program at any time as long as the teacher involved has not announced an examination in advance.

Speakers' Bureau -- A pupil speakers' bureau is organized to provide student views and youth expertise to classes in their own or other schools. They could appear before community groups, city council, state legislature, or school-oriented groups.

This is an unusual chance for pupils to put what they have learned into practice.

Special Newspaper -- If students cannot air opinions and write about controversial issues in their official school newspaper, a separate publication should provide a forum for pupils to "speak out." A pupil-teacher committee would assist and play an advisory role in the operation of the newspaper.

Student-Administrator Encounters -- Students organize an encounter each month and invite a school administrator (principal, activity director, superintendent) to answer pupil questions. The administrator would not deliver a speech, but would only respond to pupil questions. Attendance would be voluntary. The sessions could be scheduled either before or after school.

Student Community Volunteers -- This activity is as an extension of the formal curriculum. Students work in nearby

mental hospitals, day-care centers, or other facilities where there is an expressed need.

Most communities will look with favor on this activity. Pupils can get a great deal of personal satisfaction.

Student-Developed Learning Materials -- Students who have a flair for writing and are knowledgeable in a given subject area develop learning packets to be used as a vehicle for individualized learning. Students take a specific behavioral objective and develop means for attaining it.

Where money is in short supply, this can be one way to "bridge the gap."

Student Exchange Program Committee -- Students are actively engaged in planning and conducting exchange programs with schools that are similar to their own as well as with those schools that are culturally, economically, and socially different from their own. Exchanges that last more than one day would be encouraged.

Student Governing Organization -- This organization is composed of representatives from various grades who were elected by the students. Advisory representation from the various student groups is also included. These pupils have coordinating and supervisory responsibility over all student co-curricular activities.

Student Lounge -- Students develop guidelines and criteria for use of an area set aside in school. Comfortable

chairs, game tables and reading tables are provided. Students have complete control over the operation of such a facility. This item should be considered in the design of all new buildings.

Student Request for New Courses -- A student steering committee receives requests from pupils for adding new courses in the curriculum. There is an established and legitimate channel for all requests from this committee and a final disposition made relative to pupil suggestions. The steering committee would refine pupil ideas and outline possible course content for areas under consideration.

Student-Teacher Discussion Groups -- Students organize informal discussion sessions focused on the significant issues of the day. All students and teachers would be invited to participate. Each discussion group is limited to eight participants to assure adequate involvement. Some sessions are conducted in the homes of pupils and teachers. The number of groups is determined by the interest level of the prevailing topic.

Study Centers -- A facility within or outside the school is open during the day and evening to provide assistance to youth. Services offered depend upon requests and the policies of operation are devised by the youth. Attempts are made to secure needed resources to help youth with learning problems.

This compendium represents a beginning in identifying some of the ways of fostering student participation in the secondary school. You can list many more than can be used in your particular situation. In large high schools it makes sense to appoint a director of student activities -- one who spends full time being concerned about youth involvement. His operation should be conducted away from the principal's office so that it will not be associated with discipline and the establishment.

Reading through the suggested list of activities shows youth involvement procedures can be stimulating and can be a vital part of the school experience.

You can make them so!

Following is an instrument designed to help you secure a profile of your student involvement practices. It can help you analyze how well you are doing in providing real opportunities for youth to participate in the program of your school and classroom. (See page 57.)

The Realities Of Involvement Activities

There are some secondary schools in the United States where student opinions are valued. Fortunately, these more enlightened schools are consulting their captive education consumers and involving them in the real decisions on modification of the high school program. It must be remembered

QUALITATIVE DIMENSIONS OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES[1]

SUGGESTION: Build a profile for your student Council!! For your school!! For your classroom activity!!

1. ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITY:

Acceptable grades required	All individuals eligible if they meet realistic criteria logically related to the goals of the organization

2. WHO?

Only the "responsible, respectable" students	A range of students representative of actual socio-economic status, ethnic, racial, sex, age and interest groups

Testing

3. SELECTION PROCEDURES:

Appointed by one individual adult	Appointed by committee of adults	Appointed by committee of students	Appointed by committee of students and adults	Elected by peers, open nominations, self-selected

4. INVOLVEMENT IN PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION:

Problems traditionally identified for that activity	Problems suggested & approved by adult authority group	Problems suggested or approved by advisor or teacher	Problems suggested and approved by youth concerned, using adult professionals as resources	Problems also initiated by other students

5. INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING ON PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF ACTIVITIES:

Never	Seldom	Occasionally, Often	Frequently	Regularly, Institutionalized

6. QUALITY OF INVOLVEMENT:

No involvement	Consultative, advisory only	Full voice in discussion, no vote	Equal decision-making power with adult participants	Sole decision making power

Relevancy and Commitment

[1] Ibid. New Roles. (Used with permission. Credit and appreciation is extended to the authors.)

that the disaffected or alienated student is not only in the inner city schools where disadvantaged children are in attendance, but in all kind of schools.[1]

A graduate seminar in secondary education at Wayne State University, under the direction of Dr. Roland C. Faunce, developed a compendium of school activities to show that pupils serve society in some Detroit areas' schools. In one school the pupils were actively involved in helping to pass an open housing ordinance. These same pupils followed that activity with an exchange program between schools in the suburbs and the inner city of Detroit. The groups' most recent success was a drive for voter registration. Students in another school became involved as volunteers in a state hospital. They were willing to devote one night a week in the performance of such duties as were helpful to patients. The seminar concluded that much of the success of these pupils could be attributed to the following factors:

1. The students felt needed and consulted;
2. They were permitted to be self directed;
3. Their responsibilities had meaning, purpose, and interest;
4. They had no feeling of powerlessness.[2]

[1]Cowelti, Gordon, "Youth Assess the American High School", P.T.A Magazine (May, 1968), p.17.

[2]Metropolitan Detroit Bureau, "Students Serve Society", Teaching Core. (Metropolitan Detroit Bureau of School Studies, Wayne State University (September, 1968), p.1-8. (mimeographed)

The New York City school superintendent is also exploring means of increasing pupil involvement in decision making. He has appointed three students on a 12-member Committee on Student Participation in School Management. The committee also includes parents, teachers, and principals. A major purpose of the committee will be to recommend to the superintendent the most promising methods of involving pupils in high school administration and policy making; a real step in resolving the problems in urban education.[1]

A school system in Illinois has looked upon student activists as a catalyst for program improvement. They have been insightful enough to hire an ombudsman for high school students who want to involve themselves in various kinds of activities. The ombudsman perceives his role as one in which he helps students implement what they want to do. Secondary pupils in this school system are assured of an opportunity to be heard, regardless of how reactionary the idea may be. The only criterion used by the ombudsman in the selection of activities is that they have educational or humanitarian value for the school. When students came to school wearing black arm bands mourning the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, they were not suspended from school for their actions. The school administration helped the

[1]Time, "High Schools," Time Magazine, December 20, 1968, pp. 47-48.

students develop a series of seminars relative to the problems of white racism in our society. Another segment of the school population became aware, through their classes and the news media, of increased racial tensions. The group of interested and concerned pupils sold copies of the Kerner report in their community. The report also became a part of the social studies course. In this school system pupils have a chance to view all sides of an issue in a school that cares about them. The board of education knows that tensions are reduced when pupils have a healthy outlet for their energies.[1]

Students in a New Jersey high school have the cooperation of their school board in discussing controversial issues. Through the Forum on American Problems Club, which was initiated by pupils, the students meet every Friday afternoon to discuss problems ranging from racism to school dress regulations. All students, regardless of whether they are club members or not, are free to express their views on any topics at the forums, before the student council, or at a pre-arranged after-school assembly. Students have a real opportunity to discuss the burning issues of our times as part of their dynamic education in this school system.[2]

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1 "Providing Channels for Student Activism," School Management, November, 1968, pp. 78-80.

2 "Helping Students Discuss the Hot Topics," School Management, November, 1968, pp. 88-92.

The Philadelphia Board of Education now pays black youngsters to participate in suburban retreats, just to exchange dialogue with school officials about their grievances. One Chicago high school has permitted the student body to elect eight of their peers and eight teachers to review, very candidly, the problems in the school. The students are giving helpful advice on curriculum changes.[1]

This is a sample of innovative pupil activities that have been recently reported in the news media. It is important that we search for other successful models for youth involvement. The writers contend that it is time to review activity programs in the secondary schools, to be sure that they contain the ingredients of youth involvement. The time has come for us to forget the number of activities offered in school, and concentrate on the quality of the involvement. The quality of that involvement can be improved as we open the lines of communication, according to Dale:

> "The good mind requires the constant give-and-take of debate, discussion, argument. The challenge to other minds pushes a person to the full extent of his powers. A good learning situation is a student at one end of a dialogue and a teacher at the other. Minds are honed sharp by the abrasive effect of mind on mind. A good mind associates freely with other minds in a reciprocity of ideas. Feelings as well as ideas are shared. One good idea that a student develops by himself is worth a half dozen that he passively absorbs from others."[2]

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1 "High Schools," Time Magazine, February 23, 1968, p.46.

2 Dale, Edgar, "A Good Mind," The News Letter, Vol. 32, No. 7 (April, 1968), p.2.

It is truly the responsibility of the professional educator to guarantee each pupil a chance to develop to his capacity. A dynamic, innovative activity program can assist in this effort.

CHAPTER V

CASE HISTORIES OF CONFRONTATION AND STUDENT UNREST

The three case histories which follow are based on fact. They come out of interviews with secondary principals and students from various areas of the nation and from an intensive study of the literature. The reports are anonymous because the contributors asked that they be so. In addition, the authors have combined information from several cases so that a greater number of events could be included and generalizations of the greatest value could be presented.

Dress And Grooming Rules Rally Students

"That damn Armenian kid will be the death of me," said Jack Randall, principal of the Huff High School, as he slumped dejectedly into his desk chair. Jack shook his head and said again and again, "Why?" "Why?" "Why?"

Jack felt that the rise of student unrest at Huff paralleled the activities of Danny Nahabedian. This bright but non-conforming junior had first come to his attention one month ago. It was routine really. Danny had worn ankle boots (a clear violation of the dress code) and was suspended from school until his parents reported with him and the dress code was explained to them. If Bill Blair, the assistant principal, hadn't had the flu, Jack would not have met the boy and his mother. The assistant principal normally dealt with discipline

cases. Danny and his mother listened with respect to the standard explanation of why rules are necessary and that any other infraction would bring a stiffer penalty. Danny listened with great care to the rules and asked only one question -- "When were these rules established?" Jack frankly admitted that he could not remember exactly--some years ago. A behavior code had been the first order of business of the new student council in the new high school. "New high school?" thought Jack to himself; "Why that was nearly ten years ago." Danny hadn't said anything, but he had evidently caught Jack's expression of realization that the rules had not been reviewed recently. Dan smiled a very wise smile for a 16 year old boy.

Jack made a mental note to raise the issue with the Assistant Principal to see about a possible revision. It probably wasn't necessary since most students conformed to the code. Oh, there were some cases of violation. In fact, now that he thought about it, in the last few years matters of dress and grooming kept him busy quite a bit of the time. Finally Jack had all but given up on enforcement. After all, how long is hair that's "too long?" How short is too short a skirt? Bill Blair, the assistant principal, was a young, eager, former footballer and gladly took on the job of riding herd on the matter. Faculty support was good because there was a strong belief that correct dress was related to proper behavior.

In a way, Jack was not surprised when a week later

Bill Blair came to report that he had suspended Danny for three days (the standard penalty for a second offense). Danny had worn jeans in violation of the code. Jack decided to talk with Danny personally on this one. Danny good humoredly pointed out that the rule was against wearing blue jeans... his were green! Yes, he knew the intention of the rule and realized that his dress was not in the spirit of the code. It finally came out that he had deliberately defied the rules with the purpose of showing how ridiculous the code was. He asked politely, but with a flash of anger, whether he was suspended as Mr. Blair had indicated. "Yes, and you're dismissed," said Jack bluntly because the boy's attitude irritated him and because he felt he should support Blair.

"To whom do I appeal?" asked Danny very deliberately.

"The Superintendent," Jack replied briefly. And Danny did.

In fact, Danny and his parents, after securing no support from the superintendent, went through the process of getting on the agenda of the board of education. In retrospect, it was not surprising that the board agreed with the Nahabedian family that the rules seemed a bit arbitrary and dated. They also agreed that the ruling that caused Danny's suspension was ambiguous since green jeans were not expressly forbidden. The board directed that Danny not lose credit for time lost and that the Huff student council and administration study the

dress code with an eye to revising it to more closely fit current practice and to aid fair enforcement. Danny's case was strengthened immeasurably by the presentation of petitions demanding dropping of the dress code, signed by over 900 of the school's 1300 pupils.

Jack was determined to give his full attention to the matter. The charge was given to the student council and Jack was pleased at the orderly and workmanlike way the group went about tackling the problem. They formed a committee to ascertain the practices in nearby schools. Another group was to assess student and teacher attitudes and solicit their views on revising the code. Still another committee would look at what research had to say about the impact of student dress and grooming on behavior. One student leader, his eyes shining, confessed to Jack that he'd been on the council for two years and this was the first time he had felt that they had been involved in a decision that <u>really</u> meant something.

Jack made special efforts to involve and communicate with the staff on the revision of the code. He also requested that the council give attention to how the resulting code could be disseminated widely among both students and parents.

The joys of the council members faded as days went by because they, for the first time, felt the pressure from peers and parents and became aware of the weight of decision making responsibility. Two near walkouts occurred in support of a more liberal dress code.

The dress and grooming code which resulted from their deliberation was a compromise. Some prohibitions remained, but the code was greatly liberalized. Criteria for dress and grooming related in the main to matters of health and safety. Arbitrary rules which could be variously interpreted were removed.

A few weeks after adoption of the code there were few differences in dress or behavior which could be perceived in the halls of Huff. Some students did elect to "express themselves and show their individuality" through their dress. The major positive outcome was satisfaction felt by students to discover the progress that could be made through their efforts. Once having tasted success, they began to work for and insist on other needed changes.

It is sad to testify that for this small measure of success Danny Nahabedian became a martyr to change. Because he was the vortex of the turmoil and was looked upon by many as the originator and organizer of the revolt, the staff (consciously and unconsciously) was on his back. He got more than his share of discipline and was called down for any infraction or near violation. Danny dropped out before the end of his senior year. The faculty and student body don't know where Danny is today. However, the fresh breeze of change which he started is still blowing through the halls of Huff High School.

Analysis

Jack is convinced that Danny had but set in motion the events which were waiting for a push. If it hadn't been Dan, it would have been some other youth insensed with some injustice and frustrated at his inability to bring about a needed change. Jack observes:

> "One radical or norm violating student doesn't make an uprising. There is usually a broader feeling of dissatisfaction and unrest when protest occurs. Outside people or events can trigger an outbreak of unrest, but the chances are more likely if unresolved issues have been allowed to smoulder.
>
> The major lesson I've learned is that it is essential that students become convinced that important changes can be brought about through existing mechanisms. If this isn't true, the principal and staff should see to it that the change vehicles are revamped and revitalized. If established channels don't work, students will create new ones and we probably won't like the way they do it.
>
> I think I need to initiate some listening posts -- maybe a student advisory committee, so I can pick up how the kids feel. I had no idea the dress code was such an issue with the students.
>
> Time was when the principal's word was law. His rulings never questioned. Those days have gone forever. Our new dress code is a minimum set of guidelines which can be applied fairly and is in tune with the times. If we had rules which are unfair, outdated, arbitrary or infringed on the rights of the individual, they would be challenged -- that's the present climate in our school and in the world today.
>
> It seems to me kids today are much less willing to let their values be compromised. They are more sensitive to what is "right" and "wrong" with our schools and our nation. They are upset by what they see and are willing to take risks

> to try to remedy the situation. They know how to use the administrative machinery to protect their rights and how to establish mechanisms to make grievances known if a method does not exist. They are also often willing to make sacrifices to win their cause.
>
> I was amazed at the excellent manner in which the student council went about studying the code. It was a great thing that happened. I gave them a real issue to tackle and they came through in a big way. They proved they were a responsible and viable decision making group. I learned how valuable a contribution they can make. I'll be making much more use of them in the future."

A Minority Group Is Heard From

Jim Walters maneuvered his car into the area marked "Principal," carefully locked all the doors, glanced at the bright sunlit sky, and walked rapidly toward the rear entrance of Roosevelt High. He was a bit surprised to see a cluster of students studying him as he entered the building. They usually weren't on hand so early, nor were they so interested in his behavior. The halls had their usual eerie preschool quiet and his footsteps echoed hollowly as he made his way toward the office. Before he'd even reached the outer office door Mrs. Marsh, his secretary, rushed to meet him. She looked very worried and even more harried than usual. "They're in there," she said, pushing her hair back from her face. "They were waiting when I unlocked the office this morning -- I tried to stop them but they forced their way in..."

"Slow down, Beverly -- who's in there? What's wrong?" asked Walters.

"Archy Brown, Percy Carleton, Jim Croft...most of the Negro students in the school. They have a list of demands; they're sitting in your chair, and smoking. I told them to get out and you should have heard the language," said Mrs. Marsh in a voice which was a mixture of anger and disbelief.

Jim Walters was mad. What do those kids think they're doing? He burst into the outer office intending to order the youths out. He found the door locked. At first he shouted through the door demanding the group leave. All he got was a flurry of four letter words. His threats of calling the police and their parents were met with laughter and more improper remarks. He gave the door a furious shake and when it didn't yield, he retired to the counselors' office to phone the superintendent and consider what his next steps should be.

Dr. Cansfield, the Superintendent, urged him to calm down and indicated he'd be on hand in ten minutes. That few minutes gave Jim Walters an opportunity to regain his composure and consider the situation. Students would be entering in about ten minutes. He asked his assistant to spread the word about what had happened to the staff. The public address system was in the office so he couldn't use it -- then he realized the gang that was in there might put it to use. He called his chief custodian and asked if the power could be turned off in the office area and the phones be blocked from making calls inside and out. Since it was possible, he ordered it be done. He also arranged that information and food could not be passed

to the demonstrators through the window.

Superintendent Cansfield arrived and, after a review of the status of the situation, agreed with Jim that the following steps should be taken:

- The police should be alerted but not called to the scene.
- The board members should be apprised of the situation.
- Jim should handle the situation for the present.
- Further threats of punishment would not be made at this time.
- Jim would attempt to initiate person-to-person talks with the young men.
- Such discussions would be initiated after the youth agreed to vacate the office.
- School would continue unless the situation became more serious.
- Students were to be informed of what was occurring.

As Dr. Cansfield was leaving a call came for him from the local paper asking about a rumored take-over. The superintendent handed the phone to Jim who gave a straight forward, unemotional account of what had transpired. He requested that the paper not send a representative since it might stir things up. Jim pledged to keep the reporter informed.

His offer of discussion with the youth was refused at first. This time Jim did not respond to the obscenities, but matter-of-factly indicated that he was willing to listen to their concerns but that no further discussion would take place until they had relinquished the office. He then left the area and requested his secretary inform him when the youths were ready to talk.

It was well after lunch time and morning classes had been more or less normal. Jim used his time to review school rules and system policies which might relate to the situation. He also kept in touch by phone with the superintendent, the police, and the newspaper.

Shortly after school ended and the non-demonstrating students had left without incident, he was called to the office. He found his door open and ten Black youths sitting defiantly around the room. As he entered he was tempted to confront Percy Carleton who sat smoking in his desk chair, thought better of it, and perched on the edge of his desk. "Now what's the difficulty?" he asked, steadily trying to keep emotion out of his voice. Archy Brown grimly presented a hand written statement which charged the school was a racist institution and a list of fifteen demands ranging from requiring Afro-American history for graduation to dismissal of the principal, and his replacement by a black administrator. Jim Walters accepted the list, studied it briefly, and controlled a flush of anger at the demands and the language used in the document. At last he said, "This list is obviously the result of a great deal of thought." The boys looked at each other with surprise and pleasure.

Jim continued, "I'd appreciate an opportunity to study the document. Could I meet with you at 8:30 tomorrow morning?"

The youths looked uncertainly at one another. They were a bit taken aback at Jim's unexpected compliment on what they

had planned to be an upsetting document. After a quick conference the young men indicated they wanted to discuss the issues immediately. Jim indicated that he would need several hours to study their requests and perhaps they would like to go home for dinner and return after 9:00 p.m. More discussion resulted in a decision that the negotiations resume the next morning. In response to the demand that Jim have a definite answer on each item, he indicated he would do his best to have a response to each request. Jim's cool reasonableness seemed to have a calming effect on the boys and they left in a mood of quiet good humor and unexpressed defiance.

The recess gave Jim a chance to confer with the superintendent and inform the staff about the latest developments in the situation. Jim selected a few well founded items from the list such as including pictures of distinguished Black Americans among the portraits hung in the school halls. He carefully checked the proper established machinery for review and involvement on each item. When he met with the youths the next morning, he presented them with a written response to each item. Those within his prerogatives he granted where he felt he could. He indicated that some requests involved approval by the student council, the board of education, or the superintendent. He offered to arrange appointments with the appropriate groups and the use of office duplication equipment so that they could get their presentations in order.

One member of the group greeted the principal's response

with a single, loud four letter word. The group laughed long and somewhat nervously at the irreverent comment. Jim Walters sat quietly waiting for an indication of acceptance or rejection from the group. Archy, now obviously the leader of the group, said flatly and not too politely that they weren't about to be given such a run around. The administration was to meet the demands immediately or the group would walk out and picket the school. Jim Walters indicated he was ready to discuss the items and procedures to handle their concerns now or at a later time. The group walked out.

It was nearly a week before the immediate crisis was resolved and the situation continues to be a source of concern. Peaceful picketing gave way to a bit of violence. Those few involved were suspended. Others lost credit for class time missed with an opportunity to make up work provided. Black student demands are still in the process of being considered. While only a few requests have been granted, there is a new and continued awareness of the needs and concerns of Black students at Roosevelt High.

Analysis

Jim Walters is the first to admit that the outcome of the confrontation was not ideal. He also recognizes the weaknesses in his response to the dissonant group. He indicates one lesson he has learned is that such confrontations seldom

have a happy and clear-cut ending. Other key concepts growing out of this experience identified by Jim are:

"I shouldn't have lost my temper -- my initial response was emotional. You can't afford to let the kids' actions or language destroy your logic.

Backing by the superintendent was vital. It's my school and I should be the one to handle such problems.

I should have made it possible for all individuals and groups in the school to make their concerns known. My school needs more formal and informal means of two-way communication. I thought I knew what was going on but I obviously didn't.

In a crisis situation you need the support of staff. You can't marshall needed cooperation without a good ongoing relationship. I must continue to encourage staff involvement and give attention to staff needs and concerns.

Our school rules and system policies must be brought up to date. All contingencies are not provided for. Extensive involvement of students and faculty should be part of the review process.

I think police involvement should be a last resort. We didn't call on them this time, but we had good liaison and, believe me, it was comforting knowing they were prepared to be on hand within ten minutes.

I've learned to be patient and not hand out punishment too readily. A disproportionate penalty elicits a hostile response. Schools are for the education of youth. You can't teach them if they are suspended or expelled.

Giving a little is necessary and worthwhile. We all know schools need improvement and kids do have some good ideas and can really identify areas where change is needed.

Being too quick to respond to demands, even in granting them, usually just invites additional and even more impossible demands.

Even if it's difficult, I believe showing respect and calm has a good effect.

Leveling with the press was a good idea. I found the newspaper folk reasonable and cooperative once they found I kept them informed.

More planning for various contingencies should have been done. I should have worked out with the school leadership alternative plans of action in the event of disturbances. It's not too late to start now. But I'll not publicize the planning nor the strategies as that may, in itself, be provocative.

I'll strive to make the plan simple and flexible. It's good administration to make certain an individual is designated to be in charge and oriented to the plan whenever I am absent. I'll work out the emergency program in cooperation with those to be involved so that each person knows the role he is to play. Necessary phone numbers of key staff, police and fire departments, and other agencies likely to be involved should be compiled. Procedures for clearing the building, assuring security, and protecting students, faculty and the building should be established."

Free Speech and A Free Press

His name was Mike Murphey. He was principal of Riverside High and he would never forget May 4, 1972. That's when it all started. Wednesday was the day of publication of Mainstream, the official student newspaper. A sputtering Sidney Porter, faculty advisor to the publication, rushed into Murphey's office holding the top corners of the issue as if it were contaminated. He spread it full width on Murphey's desk and said in an exasperated voice, "Those damn kids -- I can't figure out how they did it." What Sidney referred to was the front page editorial and accompanying stories which differed greatly from the galley

proofs he'd ok'd the day before. "Not only that, Mr. Murphey," Sidney continued, "but the staff is really on my neck." "No wonder," thought Mike as he examined the publication which called for evaluation of the faculty by the students, abolition of hall passes, freedom to leave the building during free periods and lunch hours, and demands to be involved in selecting what was studied. The issue also contained articles taking a strong stand against the federal government's actions regarding the war, poverty, and discrimination. The local community did not escape either. A story criticizing the lack of recreational facilities and entertainment for youth was prominent as was an article critical of the town council's decision to repair the existing bridge rather than build a new, wider structure.

For a moment Mike joined Sidney in his anger. The faculty, the town council -- the whole community would be down on him for this. He soothed Sid, assuring him that he'd talk with the editor and firmly establish Sidney's authority to approve the content of future issues. He also indicated that he would explain to the faculty that the issue wasn't Sidney's fault.

When Sidney left, Mike immediately summoned the student editor. The talk with Sandford Morris, and the two student writers who accompanied him, brought out the following views. Sidney Porter was felt by the students to be a block to producing a meaningful paper. They felt he was fearful of having any "gut" issues touched upon. The pupils indicated they had time

and time again tried to put some life in the publication, but any item which could possibly be controversial was red penciled by the advisor.

Finally, in desperation, the youths had arranged an elaborate plot presenting a false set of galleys for approval while printing the real issue which contained their views. Yes, they knew it was unauthorized. No, they hadn't considered talking with the principal about the problem. They had felt sure Mr. Porter's stand represented what the administration and the community wanted -- a tame publication which gave students some experience in writing but not a tool to express and communicate their feelings and needs -- not a vehicle to bring about change.

The earnestness of Sandy and his staff was obvious. On parting Sandy asked a very disturbing question -- "Is a free press only for adults?"

When the students had left, he sat down and read the paper carefully from cover to cover. Mike lit his pipe, sat back and thought about the problem. Trying to examine the situation objectively, Mike had to admit some of the concerns voiced in the paper had merit. Many of the "demands" made sense -- longer school library hours, more books, more participation by pupils. These are things he'd thought about but hadn't had time to work on. Also, he thought with a smile, Sidney wasn't exactly the type of individual he'd like supervising his activities. Mike didn't feel he could change the faculty advisor to the paper.

He had to back Sid on this. In addition, what the students had done was against the rules and some action had to be taken. Although it was a somewhat futile act (many issues were already in the hands of pupils), he ordered distribution of the paper stopped. He also addressed a memo to the faculty explaining what happened. He indicated in the memo that discipline of the pupils involved would take place. (What manner of discipline or how stringent it would be he had not determined so he didn't treat the issue in detail in the memo.) He had mixed feelings about the situation. The kids were not wrong in their commitment to make the paper have meaning. They were wrong in the methods they'd used. He felt obliged to support the advisor (as he backed all his staff when they enforced school policy to the best of their ability). Yet he knew that Sidney was not the right individual to sponsor the student paper and that the Mainstream was far from the mainstream of student thought at Riverside.

By the next day the fire of freedom of the press and free speech had taken hold in the school. The student council had discussed the disputed issue of the paper and came out with a statement that supported the need for a more vital student press but chastized the student news staff for the methods used.

The faculty was mixed, with some teachers seeing the occurrence as a threat to their authority, while others felt gratified that students knew the Bill of Rights and were willing to "lay it on the line" to exercise their rights.

Mike was diligently working on this problem when another

related situation occurred which required immediate attention.

Mrs. Hazeltor visited his office and indignantly presented a copy of a piece of White Panther literature. Mike had seen this kind of material before. Liberally laced with the most obscene four letter words, the brochure preached violence as a means of securing rights. Mrs. Hazelton claimed Sandy Morris had passed out copies in the school between class periods. When confronted, the disillusioned and somewhat defiant boy, admitted distributing the material. He voiced disappointment at the lack of support from the student council and was bitter over the lack of student commitment to needed reforms. Sandy admitted breaking the school rules. Yes, he was aware that the principal had to "o.k." any material distributed in school, on school grounds or on the buses. He was suspended from school until his parents came to school and from his position as editor of the paper until further notice. He appeared with his parents before school the next morning and was reinstated so that no class time was lost. Both Sandy and his parents pledged that he would obey school rules in the future. Sandy was a senior and suspension for a period of time might mean he would fail to graduate. Mike indicated a further infraction of the rules could mean expulsion.

Mike spent the next two days on routine school problems, but the question of an editor for the school paper and whether a new advisor should be appointed seldom left his mind. The issue of the Mainstream and the White Panther literature were on the mind of the superintendent, the board, and the community

as the many phone calls he received testified.

What capped it off was to return to his office after the school day to find an irate Sidney Porter waving a copy of Undercurrent, Riverside's new underground paper. It was an unimpressive, mimeographed document, but its content, including four letter words, was far from colorless. Investigation proved that Sidney's allegations were accurate. The paper was printed and distributed by Sandy Morris. It had been handed out by Sandy at the hamburger shop opposite the school. Mike felt he had no choice. He called the Morris home and talked with the parents. He followed up his call with a letter to the parents and to the board of education requesting Sandy's expulsion. He also called the superintendent and informed him of what had happened and of the written request he had made.

Later that evening Mike had just settled down to read some reports when he was surprised to receive an urgent phone call from the superintendent. His presence was required at a meeting of the school board. Mike put on his tie, slicked down his hair and rushed to the board room. A special meeting of the board to consider the need for additional financial support for the district had turned into a discussion of the student publications problem. It had been precipitated by the publication of Undercurrent by Sandy Morris. Mike was asked if it were true that he had requested the boy be expelled. Mike indicated the contents of the letter which contained the request. "I move Sandford Morris be expelled for the remainder of the

term," said one board member . "Second," said another and, as if the august group in its wisdom had solved the whole controversy, the chairman said, "Good -- meeting adjourned."

Mike, at first, was pleased at the board's swift support. He was to learn, however, that the matter was far from over.

Next morning Mike, the superintendent, and the board were presented with a restraining order in which the court directed that Sandy be admitted to school until a hearing on the case was held. The next days were filled with talks with lawyers, strategy meetings, and preparation of their case. Briefly, it hinged on the fact that Sandy had repeatedly broken school rules -- first, in his position as editor publishing an unauthorized issue of Mainstream; next, he had distributed White Panther material in school, a clear violation of policy. The underground paper was unauthorized and contained obscene language. Finally, the board of education had the right, by state statute, to expel pupils. That was the school's case.

Sandy's lawyer presented his arguments which obviously had been carefully prepared. They boiled down to the following points. Sandy had broken the rules by publishing the unauthorized issue of Mainstream, but he had been punished for it by losing his editorship. Passing out the White Panther pamphlets was admittedly wrong and he had taken the resulting suspension and met the school's terms to be readmitted. The lawyer maintained Sandy had broken no rules by distributing his issue of

Undercurrent. This had been done after school and beyond school property. To expel him for this was a breech of his rights. Further, it was a prejudiced action precipitated by his early admittedly improper actions but for which he had already been punished. Also, the lawyer argued that expulsion for a senior would mean no graduation -- a cruel and excessive punishment. To the claim that the Undercurrent was obscene the lawyer presented a copy of Harper's Magazine and of Salinger's Catcher in the Rye. Mike was forced to admit that copies of these publications were in the Riverside High School library. The lawyer showed they contained the same words as in Sandy's publication.

The judge seemed to enjoy the whole affair. Mike suspected the judge had been a student activist in his younger years. At any rate, the court declined to get into the area of obscenity. The magistrate indicated that in his judgment the expulsion related to the Undercurrent affair and that the other issues, while interesting, would not be considered. His findings were that the arbitrary manner in which Sandford had been expelled had not allowed for "due process" and that such a serious step as interfering with a youth's graduation from high school should only be taken after careful procedures have been initiated to protect the rights of the accused. In addition, the lawyer for the board had failed to show that distribution of Undercurrent had been disruptive of the school program which in the judge's mind would be the only reason for

expulsion in such a case. "After all," said the judge, with a parting wink, "how can a mere boy know these words were wrong to use when he found them in your own school library!"

Analysis

Sandy graduated and Mike Murphey continued as high school principal -- but neither would ever be the same. Mike was determined to avoid, whenever possible, involving the court in solving school problems. He was equally committed to examining with his faculty and pupils the whole question of student rights. Mike was to learn much about how students feel and think and about due process of law and other concepts related to political and civil rights. As an immediate and short term analysis, however, he cites these new awarenesses:

> "As a principal, I need to keep tab on my faculty sponsors and advisors. They are my communication link, but they should be a two-way means of communication. Having faculty advisors does not relieve the principal of the responsibility to know student needs.
>
> I need to set up machinery so that students can make their opinions known. They need opportunities to make decisions. We can work with pupils to make the curriculum more relevant.
>
> Backing a staff member whether he is right or wrong may make the staff feel good, but some staff actions are not worthy of support and I should tell them so.

> I now feel the board acted precipitously. At first I was flattered by their support. In retrospect, however, I feel that, in the heat of the situation, they were mistaken in ignoring their usual procedure of a hearing with the parents of a child being expelled. Thus I must strive to see that "due process" procedures are established and used; no matter what the nature of the offense.
>
> I can't be responsible for everything that goes on in the community. Disruption of the school program is a good guideline to use as a criteria for becoming involved and for taking disciplinary measures. Suspension and expulsion are negative tools and, although they must be used on serious occasions, they should be used sparingly.
>
> Parents want kids in school. Sandy's folks didn't support his actions and they were disgusted by the White Panther material and his use of improper language in his underground paper. I could have had them on my side, but the parents were maneuvered into a situation where they had to fight the school to protect the student's right to an education. I'm going to be sure to confer with the kids and their parents in my office and try to avoid doing it in a court room.
>
> Most of all, I learned the world and its values are changing. Schools must be sensitive to pupils' needs and students' rights. A new concern and dedication is reflected in the behavior of today's youth. Perhaps with sufficient face to face communication both students and faculty can learn what to do about it."

CHAPTER VI

STUDENTS AS CITIZENS

Over 87 percent of the nation's teachers feel their schools should regulate wearing apparel and personal grooming.[1] Most administrators do so, or at least have a dress and grooming code which is enforced to some degree. It has also been general practice to censor student publications, search lockers and seize unauthorized items, and require a student to give an accounting of his actions when accused. Increasingly, students and judges are questioning these actions. Sometimes the courts and laws are on the side of the staff and sometimes they are on the side of the student. It is important to know legally and morally the prerogatives of the board and the staff and the rights of students.

Prerogatives Of Staff, Administration And School Boards

Education is a function of the various states. However, legislatures and state educational authorities delegate certain powers to local school district boards of education. School authorities have quite broad powers in controlling and disciplining pupils so as to assure proper management of schools. Administrators also have discretionary authority to regulate

[1]National Education Association, Today's Education, Washington, The Association, May, 1969, p.25.

the conduct of pupils outside of school hours and beyond the boundaries of school property where there is a reasonable relationship to the management and proper order of the school.

When the student is "at home", school control gives way to the parent or guardian's authority. An exception is where secret societies are banned by school authorities. The courts have found that the school can disband such groups and discipline the members even when parents sponsor or condone the organization.

School administrators hold a "common law" position. They derive their powers and duties not from the statutes but from the contract covering their appointment and from board policy. Until recently, tradition played a major role in defining the administrators' prerogatives. Now the courts are more deeply involved in defining the role. It should be remembered that the administrator is an employee, not a public official and that he is legally answerable to the representatives of the people -- the board of education.

The relationship of the teacher to the board of education is also contractual. Both teachers and administrators are employees and to work effectively must know the extent and the limits of their authority and responsibility under the codes of the state.

The local board of education has a sizable amount of autonomy. It is a creature of the state legislature and receives its power from state statutes. The exact parameters of their

authority are difficult to define since they change with the new challenges such as teacher negotiations and court decisions on student rights. In general, the board has ministerial powers (those duties required by law such as preparing a budget) and discretionary powers (those areas not covered by statute where decisions must be made which affect the operation of the school).

Boards legally may delegate ministerial duties to the administration and staff. In matters requiring discretionary judgment they may not abrogate their responsibility as a board to take the action required.

When school boards have used their discretionary powers, the courts have not been inclined to inquire about the wisdom of rulings except where actions of the school board were illegal, unreasonable, or arbitrary.

The guideline for the authority of educational institutions has been the traditional view that the school acted "in loco parentis" (in place of the parent). The concept developed within the framework of the teachers' authority to discipline the student for the welfare of the child. It has been expanded and applied as justification for the rules and regulations used to assure smooth operation of the educational system. The emerging view (which has a better basis in law) is that such powers are necessary to the proper functioning of the school.

Because of increased knowledge of human behavior and greater awareness of students' rights, corporal punishment is becoming less frequently utilized. When corporal punishment is applied, the guidelines of "reasonableness," "appropriateness," and "being commensurate with the offense" are used. The courts have also specified that the punishment should be administered without malice.

The courts have upheld the right of the board of education to exclude students from attendance for inappropriate behavior. School administrators may suspend a pupil temporarily. The board may order the more permanent expulsion but it is generally agreed that the procedure should be used sparingly. It is a serious matter to deprive the student of his education. In addition, the pupil's behavior cannot be improved by the school when the student is not permitted to attend. The stigma of expulsion may follow the student, alienating him from education and perhaps increasing the likelihood of his dropping out of school. During the period of suspension or expulsion it seems fair that alternative means of education be provided. In incorrigible cases the courts will sanction the board's right to enforce reasonable rules through use of suspension or expulsion.

Youths Have Rights

The importance of education is growing and the courts have determined that a child is entitled to go to school. An

education is necessary for him to learn and to socialize with others in order for him to be an effective member of society. Statutes in all states specify compulsory education.

In general, the courts have found that children should be in school unless there are serious and enduring reasons. These reasons refer to youngsters:

1. Who do not have the "capacity" to profit from common school instruction (i.e. the mentally deficient).
2. Whose physical defects are so serious that they cannot benefit from the common school, or whose presence would be very disturbing or depressing to the group.
3. Who are unwilling to conform to reasonable rules and regulations, and to the common law of classroom discipline.[1]

There is growing recognition that youths have rights -- that children are citizens. The protection of citizenship is not reserved for adults. The Gault case established the principle that the state (or others) cannot deprive a child of due process of law.

On this basis it appears that the school principal and his staff should rethink their interpretations that they always are in loco parentis, (standing in place of the parent), as the basis of their authority over pupils. If youth are entitled to the same "due process" rights as adults, then schools should work to see that no student is denied his rights under the law.

[1]Lammert, Claude C. "The Right to Attend School", Personnel and Guidance Journal, Vol. 43, January, 1965. pp. 475-481.

The guarantees given to criminals should, at the very least, be available to children. These rights are:

1. To be informed about his right to counsel.
2. The privilege of not incriminating himself.
3. To have someone represent his interests during any investigation.
4. To have any charges specified in writing.
5. To have a fair hearing, to confront his accusers and to cross examine them.
6. To have the proceedings a matter of record.
7. The right to appeal.

These rights, supported by court decisions, dictate that guilt should not be inferred from a student's silence. Furthermore, a pupil may not be punished for exercising his right to avoid self incrimination.

These general concepts stated above will be useful in protecting the rights of pupils, in safeguarding staff and board from legal or moral trespasses, and in helping to assure a more conflict-free school environment.

Answers To Common Questions About Student Rights

Can married students be expelled? In general, the courts have found that married students should be allowed to attend school, or if excluded, that it be for a "reasonable" time only. Boards have been upheld, in some cases, in

excluding married students from extra curricular activities. Pregnant girls, married or not, may be excluded on the basis of protecting the welfare of the mother and child and the possible disruptive effect of a pregnant student in the classroom. Whether the exclusion may be permanent is not clear. The expulsion of an unmarried boy who is a father probably would not be upheld in court. In all these cases the youngsters' need for an education continues and it would seem incumbent upon school authorities to try to have these boys and girls in school or receiving education by some means whenever possible. Attention should also be given to due process as decisions are made and policies developed.

Can students protest by wearing arm bands or buttons? Yes, say the courts, since it does not disrupt the peaceful operation of the school.

May a school require that a boy cut his hair as a condition of attendance? The courts have often supported the board's right to enforce a "reasonable" rule regarding length of hair or style of cut. There is the question of an individual's right to free expression in looks as well as words. The same points relate to facial hair. School authorities have been successful in prohibiting long hair and facial hair on the basis that they "impeded the maintenance of proper classroom atmosphere." Such instances are growing less frequent.

Can the nature of student dress be specified? Yes, in cases where health or safety are involved. Even prohibitions of girls in slacks or short skirts have been upheld but this is an uncertain area since styles change and judgments are often a matter of "taste" and are subjective. School authorities generally are growing more permissive both on the question of grooming and dress.

Can a student's person or locker be searched and unauthorized items seized? The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution protects the right of privacy of the individual's person, home, and personal effects against unreasonable search and seizure. Since students are citizens, they have this protection. Recent stiffening of the court's attitude on this question has been noted. Search in emergency situations is reasonable and so are cases where the health and safety of the individual or the student body may be involved. It appears that, for instance, searching a locker where laws or the discipline of the institution are involved is warranted on the basis of "probable cause." In all cases, but especially those which ultimately may result in charges being made, it is essential that "due process" is used.

To what degree may student publications be censored? Students do not have a right to publish anything without restriction as to content or language. Libelous or slandering statements are not permitted by law. Standards of reasonable taste and responsible journalism should be maintained. However,

a student does not forfeit his right to free speech as a condition of school attendance or of working on a school newspaper. This may mean that prior censorship of the editorial comment in a student newspaper is not appropriate.

What about unauthorized or underground newspapers? The First Amendment allows expression of ideas. Again, where views expressed are libelous or slanderous, the publishers are subject to prosecution. Some rules must be maintained since there are an increasing number of forces outside the school which seek to communicate with students. The distribution of documents produced by bona fide pupils can be regulated as to time, place, and manner of distribution, but it is questionable that school authorities can regulate the content of the material.

Is policing smoking a school responsibility? In most states the purchase and smoking of tobacco by minors is forbidden. This prohibition is not usually enforced by the police or observed by merchants who sell cigarettes. More teenagers than ever are smoking and effective advertising is increasing the numbers. To combat this trend will require education -- which is a school responsibility and an area in which the staff has expertise. They are teachers, not policemen. It is difficult to see how the schools can single-handedly reverse the trend toward smoking. The schools should urge that law enforcement officials enforce the statutes for both seller and purchaser. If smoking is illegal for minors, schools cannot sanction it. The punishment given by the school officials for

offenses should be carefully determined. Suspension or expulsion may not be just for it deprives the student of his education and is unlikely to have impact on the problem.

Can aspects of health control be required or enforced by the school? Since health is necessary to good education, school authorities may set standards of pupil health. Schools may not initiate treatment without parent approval but identification of health needs, notification to parents, and assistance with remediation is appropriate. Prevention of disease as a goal is proper and the courts have upheld compulsory vaccination laws.

Can students be required to pray or be involved in religious instruction? No, say the courts. The role of the school is education. The study of the bible as literature is permissible.

Must a student salute the flag? A pupil cannot be compelled to salute the flag or join in the pledge. A student may refuse on the grounds of "conscientious scruples" based on religious convictions or personal belief.

It has been the purpose of this chapter to outline briefly the prerogatives of staff, administration, and boards of education and the rights of students. The present view of the rights and responsibilities of each group was treated broadly within the law and the decision of the courts as presently conceived.

In the next and final chapter the future of student unrest will be examined, student concerns analyzed, and do's and don'ts for coping with student militancy reviewed.

CHAPTER VII

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

A vital characteristic of the skilled administrator is his ability to anticipate needs and plan appropriately and creatively for the future. What trends are student unrest and activism taking? What changes can be expected because of these trends? How can secondary school principals and curriculum leaders take steps which will effectively prepare for the challenges, cope with events, and use these developing forces to help improve school programs?

Some educators welcome activism and the increase in student involvement. "Most schools in which I see rebellion deserve it," says Richard Foster, Superintendent of Berkeley, California.[1] Others ridicule youth participation. Dr. Jacques Barzun, Columbia University professor, observes, "If a student is, in fact, capable of framing curricula, he should be given a diploma, not a voice, because he will know everything necessary for earning that diploma."[2]

Whether you welcome student participation or oppose it, it is a factor to be dealt with and must be looked at realistically. Its impact is all around us. The National Association of Secondary Principals has indicated:

"...facing increasingly serious problems

[1]Foster, Richard L. "Slow Dance on the Killing Ground," The I D E A Reporter. Summer Quarter 1969, Institute for Development of Educational Ideas, Charles F. Kettering Foundation.

[2]The Detroit News Editorial "Students Beg the Question."

> stemming from unrest. . .in a determined effort to expand and improve services to these members who work daily on education's firing line...the NASSP has placed all members under an Educators' Professional Liability Insurance Policy... Bodily Injury and Property Damage Liability $300,000 each occurrence; Reimbursement of Attorney's fee $2,000; Bail Bond $500; and Personal Injury Liability $300,000 each occurrence."[1]

What an expressive commentary on the nature of the secondary school principalship today! Strange, too, that this student militancy and aggressiveness for change comes at a time when there has been more educational innovations than at any time in our history. It must be that students believe change is not rapid enough, not the right kind, not <u>really</u> change at all, or all three! Knowing student concerns can be a key element in planning successfully for the next developments in student unrest. Understanding what students are thinking about and why they believe what they do is a necessity for an effective school administrator.

Students' Concerns

Students in a large four state sample frankly shared their concerns about major issues and problems. They made it clear that they are vitally interested in and affected by events around them and are attempting to find meaning in life and to establish guidelines for balanced, purposeful living.

[1]From a letter sent to members of National Association of Secondary School Principals, July 15, 1969 by Owen B. Kiernan, Executive Secretary.

This cross section of nearly one thousand youth listed education, VietNam, sexuality, occupations, the draft, peer approval, politics, civil rights, competition and self identity as the ten most crucial issues.[1]

Of import to the school faculty member is that students' first concern is <u>education</u>. It is likely, then, that action and demonstration directed toward bringing about change in their school experiences will increasingly occur.

With the coming of the Age of Majority for the eighteen year old comes added concern about increased opportunity to genuinely participate in the running of our nation. Students recognize this responsibility and are vitally interested that the school in which they learn is preparing them for this important and imminent task.

Students' Perceptions Of Their School Experience

"The world seems logical to us," said Frederick Nietzche, "because we have made it logical." It is very possible that educators are applying this type of reasoning to the schools they administer. What is logical to the principal is often antagonistic to youth. How helpful it is to secure another perception of what goes on in schools -- that of the student. Youth feel <u>educational institutions are too future oriented</u> when

[1]Thornburg, Hershal, "The Statistics of Dissent." <u>Arizona Teacher</u>, March, 1969, Vol. 57, No. 4.

as the issues cited before indicate, students are concerned with today's needs and problems.

Pupils see themselves as thinking people who want to take an active share in making decisions about their lives but schools want to keep them in passive roles. They want leadership opportunities, yet "the system" assigns them in a subservient status.

Trends In Student Militancy

Spinosa wrote that "Freedom is the recognition of a necessity." It appears that more youth participation is a necessity and that principals should use their freedom to open the decision making circle.[1]

Student unrest is as prevalent in big city high schools as it is on university campuses. Its spread to all secondary schools is just a matter of time and a function of the skill (or lack of it) of the school leader. The Urban Research Center of Chicago conducted a comprehensive study of unrest. Its report makes the following observations:

"1. Protests are on the rise.

In early January, 1969 two out of three principals of city and suburban high schools reported they were experiencing some form of active student protest, according to the National Association of

[1]Cohodes, Aaron, "Inside Out," Nation's Schools.

Secondary School Principals. More than half the rural high schools and 56 percent of all junior highs also reported disruptions.

From November, 1968 through February, 1969 Dr. A. F. Westin of Columbia University monitored 1,800 daily newspapers for reports of high school disorders. During those four months, he found reports of 348 high schools in 38 states that had undergone some form of disruptions. Of these, 239 had suffered "serious episodes" involving strikes, sit-ins, riots, demonstrations or other violence.

2. The nature of the violence is related to the racial composition of the school.

In general, all-black ghetto schools suffer more severe property damage from protests than inter-racial schools. In racially integrated schools, especially where the black-white ratio is about 50-50, teenagers tend to direct violence toward each other. Where black pupils constitute a clear minority of 20 percent or less, the disruptions are relatively peaceful - sit-ins, picketing, marching on city hall, etc.

3. The triggering incident is not the cause of a high school disorder.

Almost always, the triggering incident is minor and innocuous in itself. It merely serves to unleash bitter black-white animosities and black resentments against racism. Disciplinary actions against students are also frequently elevated to "causes."

4. Black students demand changes in curriculum, in faculty and administrative personnel, and in disciplinary policies.

Black studies courses are almost universally demanded and usually granted with alacrity. But requests for more black teachers and administrators are agreed to by local boards of education in principle "if we can find them." Most high school protesters, like their college counterparts, demand amnesty for themselves and reinstatement of suspended students.

5. The school boycott is the universal tool to force acceptance of demands.

"Concerned Parents" groups and community organizations often support the boycott and the students' demands. Other organizations that have been involved include NAACP, CORE, SDS, and an OEO agency in Pittsburgh. The group most frequently accused of fomenting revolt is SDS, but only five percent of high school principals surveyed report SDS involvement in protests.

6. Security guards and police have been unable to do more than maintain an uneasy peace.

Police patrols are now common in the corridors of urban schools. Yet the presence of "cops on campus" is often an irritant to students, and sometimes causes another protest."[1]

At present dissatisfied students are a "mixed bag." Some are disillusioned, alienated youth who reject the values of our present society but are generally passive. Others feel schools are not relevant and want a voice in helping to decide issues related to curriculum, dress, grooming and student publications. They usually are not sophisticated or skilled in change strategies but are sincerely raising issues which they are concerned about. More radical activist students favor revolutionary approaches to bringing about change, have well developed but often violent strategies, and are sometimes supported by outside groups who have their own views as to the issues to be attacked.

Of course it is a guess, but it does not take too much insight to hypothesize that if the moderate activist has little

1 "Research Report Says No Arrest To Unrest." Nation's Schools, Volume 84, Number 1, July, 1969. p.42.

or no success in helping to bring about changes which have merit, the more radical forces will gain support. It seems obvious that if secondary administrators do not learn to communicate with, involve, and satisfy legitimate requests, they are likely to be faced with increasingly hostile and difficult demands. Attention should be given to establishing ways for decisions to be made which involve youth and even training youth in change strategies to make them more skillful so that confrontation does not result in chaos.

It is obvious that young people are becoming more sophisticated in their strategies and actions. Their devotion to political activities is rising. Some youth have been successful as candidates for city council, precinct delegate, and boards of education.

In urban areas we are seeing the formation of student unions which marshall student power and collect dues to finance anti-establishment efforts including support of student boycotts of schools and other institutions. Some youth are establishing cooperatives to increase their economic strength and offer alternatives to the present sources of materials and supplies.

We will continue to see formation of alternatives to the existing educational establishment. Some alternative schools, or alternate forms of education, will be an off-shoot of the parent school and will be officially sponsored. Others

will be free schools in the classic sense of being anti-establishment institutions. It is likely that more electives, fewer required courses, and more real departures from the traditional school program will be required if public school holding power is to remain at its present level.

The women's rights movement will also have increasing impact on the school. It is likely that no course will be closed to anyone of any sex and that we will see young ladies participating in varsity athletics, especially non contact sports.

The degree of student unrest relates to the racial make-up of schools. We see fewer problems in all white and all black schools. Trouble often comes when one group is in the minority and when desegregation is taking place. With the hope of open housing and with the support of the courts, it is likely that we will see more desegregation. This will call for serious attention to the preparation of faculty and students. Anti-racism education, increased emphasis on equal opportunity, and significant changes in the curriculum will be required.

It is also likely that we will continue to see more court involvement in resolving school conflicts. More and more the school administrator will be called on to show how his decisions relate to the necessary and legitimate purposes of the school. He will have to be prepared to prove, for

instance, that haircuts and skirt lengths interfere with the educational process. Arbitrary rules and regulations will be challenged by organizations and individuals concerned with the rights of pupils and aware that students do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse door.

Changes To Be Expected

The results of these trends will be reflected in major and exciting changes in the school and in the schools' relation to the community. The school administrator and his staff will develop new skills in order to relate to and work effectively with students and citizens. Increased emphasis will be placed on interpersonal skills and good human relations. More community folk will be in the school as advisors, aides, and decision makers.

Grievance procedures and other mechanisms to resolve differences among students, faculty, and citizens will be established. Student rights and due process will be scrupuously observed.

The younger Age of Majority will cause increased emphasis on citizenship in the schools and student interest and vitality will take the study of civics out of the theoretical confines of the classroom and into the community.

A look at what has happened in the secondary schools of one of our major cities which has had more than its share of

student unrest will help us understand changes which may be expected in all schools. While these changes have not occurred in each school, they represent clear trends.

Administrative Changes

1. Principals have moved from behind their desks and into areas where students are located.
2. "Block" scheduling has been initiated to reduce student movement to and from the building.
3. "Open houses" are scheduled more frequently.
4. Student handbooks have been developed which explain the rights of students.
5. A ninth hour has been scheduled as part of the school day for clubs, teacher conferences, etc.
6. The principals have sought to integrate their staffs.
7. Parent service assistants are used effectively.
8. Minority student leadership is viewed as a significant force and dialogue initiated with them.
9. Student activity coordinators are available in each building.
10. "A" and "B" students may be exempted from final examination.

Curriculum Changes

1. Reading laboratories have been set up in the high schools.
2. Many new courses have been added such as black history and literature, Swahli, Russian, bachelor commercial foods, psychology, and home management. One school operates a nursery.
3. Tutoring centers are available.
4. The possible use of team teaching and mini courses is being considered.

Counseling Changes

1. Group counseling is being used.
2. Once a week 11th and 12th graders may attend occupational information classes.
3. Closed circuit TV is used for counseling.

Change for Involvement

1. Student Councils have been converted from an elite group to a more representative organization.
2. Student/faculty/parent councils serve as advisors to the principal.
3. Everyone has helped to review rules and procedures to eliminate those that were repressive. Students have won improvements in dress codes, due process, length of hair, and other issues.
4. Surveys and questionnaires are used to get student opinions on race, course offerings, etc.

In addition, two very promising projects are operating outside the secondary schools to reduce student unrest. The Metropolitan Detroit Youth Foundation is operating a Student Resource Center in the Fisher Y.M.C.A. for youth in the Northwestern High School complex. Its major thrust is to provide students with a place to receive assistance with a wide range of their personal concerns including health care, jobs, drugs and abortion-birth control information. The project received its operational grant from New Detroit, Inc.

The other promising activity is a federally funded Human Relations Project that is housed in the Detroit Board office.

It's focus is on improving relationships in integrated schools. The staff works with students as well as teachers and administrators in five Detroit high schools. A variety of activities are conducted to eliminate racism and improve the school climate.

The interesting thing about both projects is how they are viewed by the principals in areas where they function. Principals do not feel that they have had a great deal of effect on students or staff, even though they attempt to focus on areas needing immediate attention. Students view both projects as being needed and helpful. It may be premature to assess the effectiveness of either project. One thing is certain, principals would like to have the funds of both projects to use as the need arises to stem the tide of student unrest.

Students will play the major role in conducting student affairs and in carrying out co-curricular activities. Faculty advisors will be just that. They will not run student clubs or government. Students will participate in decision making about new curriculum offerings and student behavior. In some enlightened schools the amount of student independence and autonomy will be startling by present day standards. We will see student interest in social forces as the main vehicle for learning. Students' dissatisfaction and energy will be an important source of inspiration for bringing about program improvement. Educators will have learned that changing the curriculum is difficult, that they can use all the help they can get, and that students can be of real service in identifying where change is needed and in helping to bring it about.

Do's And Don't's Of Responding To Unrest

The nature and quality of our response to student unrest is crucial. Social protest has been a tradition in America. It has proved effective in many arenas. Now the schools are being tested and what educational leaders do will help decide whether there will be change and whether the change will come with or without violence.

On one hand, dissent has a rightful place in a democratic society. On the other hand, respect for the law and maintaining order is also necessary. Protection of the rights of the individual to protest and protection of the right of the group to an education free of disruption are <u>both</u> the duty of the principal. This is an awesome responsibility.

It is hoped that the suggestions which follow will provide some guidelines in making the day to day decisions related to student unrest.

<u>Do's</u>:

1. Work hard to understand and analyze your own feelings about the points at issue and student unrest in general.
2. Establish ways to learn about how others (students, teachers, parents) feel.
3. Involve students and permit youth decision making to the greatest degree your situation permits. (Include all segments of the school population.)
4. Strive for staff understanding and support now through improving communication and participation.

5. Keep the community informed.

6. Develop rules that are fair and observe "due process."

7. Constantly examine and update rules and policies to keep pace with the changes which occur in the culture.

8. Disseminate information about school rules and policies fully to students and parents.

9. Keep the central office and board informed of what's going on.

10. Expect and request appropriate support from the superintendent.

11. Establish mechanisms for individuals and groups in homogeneous and cross status groups to make their concerns known and help solve problems.

12. Demonstrate that real changes can be brought about through student and faculty efforts.

13. Show respect for students and keep your cool!

14. Give a lot of yourself and give on issues where students' requests have merit.

15. Level with the mass media.

16. Plan carefully for all contingencies.

17. Keep tab on faculty sponsors and advisors.

18. Remember the world and its values are changing -- be sensitive to the new needs and new ways.

Don'ts:

1. Don't panic.

2. Don't be too quick to respond to or grant demands -- examine the issues from all sides.

3. Don't call in law enforcement prematurely or without cause.

4. Don't violate students' rights to due process of law.

5. Don't be too quick to hand out punishment or use force.

6. Don't take inflexible positions which cannot be modified.

7. Don't try to be responsible for everything that your students do everywhere in the community.

8. Don't just aim at cooling the situation and re-establishing the status quo. Begin a program to get at the causes of the unrest.

9. Don't be too quick to use suspension and expulsion.

10. Don't allow unrest or dissatisfaction to grow -- allow for ventilation of concerns and feelings.

11. Don't distort (to yourself or others) the reasons for the unrest which occurs in your school (e.g. Don't claim racial conflict or a student take-over without clear evidence).

12. Don't claim you're impotent to make a change you believe has merit unless you have tried. (Don't cop out and "pass the buck.")

A Challenge To School Administrators

At one time youth believed in the educational system even though the schools focused primarily on passing on factual information. "An education" was, in itself, felt to be of value. Now youth, especially in the Ghetto, are finding that they are no better off with a traditional education than they are without it. Once becoming aware of this, students and members of the community have come to question what educators say and do. They have decided that no one person or small group should be trusted to run the schools in the best

interest of every group. Citizens, parents, students - all want a part of the action.

This is not a surprising concept in America which has progressed in large measure because of a system of participation by and consent of the governed. Our governmental organization has a "built in" series of checks and balances to assure no one person or group has too much power. Youth and community folk are seeking to apply the same principle to the schools. They are wary of what they consider to be too much power and control and too little responsiveness of the educational establishment.

Mark Chester, Director of the Educational Change Team, School of Education at the University of Michigan, has devoted a sizable part of his professional career to the study of student power and decision making. He indicates students must exercise a significant degree of control over the school curriculum. He also advocates student participation in decision making in teacher recruitment, evaluation and promotion. He feels it is necessary for students to play a role in the administration of school finances. He even suggests replacement of the principal or ruling faculty body by pupils' elected student leadership. Dr. Chester feels the current climate demands sweeping changes. He recommends that, for political as well as educational reasons, we implement new structures immediately.

Dr. Chester states:

> "Not to improve, and not to advance in the face of risks, will lead to even greater threat and disaster. The absence of imaginative and just change probably will result in more numerous and more extreme short-term crises and the eventual collapse of our public educational system. The renovation and restructuring of systems of power may be one change that holds considerable promise for a more adequate future in our schools."[1]

Power has now become the name of the game. Youth are asking for decision making opportunities and citizens are demanding community participation and decentralization of school control. A question the more militant members ask is, "If we are <u>given</u> a voice, do we <u>really</u> have power since what is given can be taken away?" Their response is often to take power and negotiate a real, on-going role in running the schools.

The challenge to administrators and teachers is to find effective ways to work in this new setting. It is possible that emerging structures of decision making can capitalize on the interest and participation of a broader based group and thus have the sharing make for more "power" for everyone. The administrator who successfully works with the community to make decisions and bring about important changes will have the power of his clients added to his own influence.

It may be that if we are skillful enough, "power"

[1]Chester, Mark, "Shared Power and Student Decision Making". <u>Educational Leadership</u>, October, 1970, p.14.

(unlike "matter" which can be neither created or destroyed) will be found to be a quantity which can grow in the act of sharing it. Perhaps there is not a given amount of power that, when shared with another individual or group, results in the "sharer" having less. It is likely that more student responsibility can yield more student maturity, better faculty-student relations, a strengthened school spirit, a more effective and responsible curriculum, and a more viable educational institution which can marshall greater community support for its program.

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